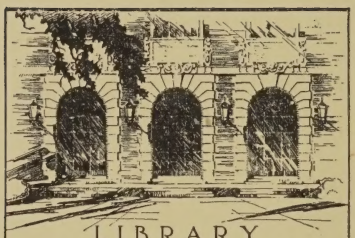
DICKENS · AND THE · DRAMA

S · J · ADAIR · FITZ-GERALD



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Dear Alice

With best Christmas Wishes
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time from your affectionate
brother Sheffield

December 25th 1910.

DICKENS AND THE DRAMA

CHARLES DICKENS AS SIR CHARLES COLDSTREAM IN "USED UP."
From a painting by Augustus Egg, R.A.

[*Frontispiece.*

DICKENS AND THE DRAMA

BEING

AN ACCOUNT OF CHARLES DICKENS'S CONNECTION WITH THE STAGE AND THE STAGE'S CONNECTION WITH HIM

BY

S. J. ADAIR FITZ-GERALD

AUTHOR OF "STORIES OF FAMOUS SONGS," "THE ZANKIWANK," "FAME, THE FIDDLER," ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS, PORTRAITS, AND REPRODUCTIONS OF PLAY BILLS

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Dedicated

TO MY VERY GOOD FRIEND

A. J. MORLEY

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INTRODUCTION

DR. JOHNSON very aptly said, "A man will turn over half a library to make one book." With regard to the compilation of "Dickens and the Drama," I may say that I have consulted some hundreds of books, plays, newspapers, magazines, play-bills, and programmes, in order to make the work as complete and correct as possible. All the information obtainable is so scattered that the collection and verification of even a few facts relating to any particular subject becomes a task of magnitude. Unfortunately, there is no such thing in existence as a dependable history of the drama, even dealing with the Victorian Age.

I have devoted several years, in and out, of assiduous labour in the endeavour to secure reliable knowledge as to the plays taken from the works of Charles Dickens, and in bringing together, in the present volume, the fruits of that labour, I have kept the importance of accuracy constantly in view.

For over thirty years my interest in all things relating to the theatre, both before and behind the

curtain, has been of the keenest. Indeed, at the age of sixteen, I was an "alleged actor," and played in many pieces from Dickens. In after years I applied myself to the writing of books and plays, and to journalism—chiefly theatrical.

In reference to my leaving the stage, I may recount a small anecdote.

I had a letter of introduction from John Lawrence Toole to Henry Irving, which, as it happened, I never presented. On the morning upon which I was to see the most charming of actors and men, I received a letter from the proprietor of a newspaper in Fleet Street, making me a certain offer, which I felt it wise to accept. Years afterwards, when I interviewed Irving for *The Era*—a paper upon which I was engaged for a long period as one of the chief writers and historians—and I may add that I was the first journalist who ever "interviewed" the then chief of the Lyceum Theatre and the doyen amongst actors—I related to him the incident of these letters. He, in his bland manner, with his most engaging smile, said: "And so you did not come to the Lyceum, but preferred Fleet Street instead? *It was damned kind of you!*"

My first experience of Dickens was through "Oliver Twist," which was, with the "Arabian Nights," my earliest literary love. Then I gradually

read all the Master's works, and as I played in the country, while yet in my teens, in many of the adaptations from his books, I began to take more than a passing interest in everything relating to Dickens, especially in connection with the drama. The result is here; and whatever its shortcomings may be, I can honestly say that I have done my conscientious best.

In the additional volumes in the Gadshill Edition of Dickens, entitled "Miscellaneous Papers: Plays and Poems," which include many valuable rescued articles from various newspapers and journals, written by Charles Dickens, and most admirably collected and edited by Mr. B. W. Matz, to whom the honour of rescuing is due, some six plays are reprinted. The first three are from the pen of Dickens himself, when, as a very young man, he began to cast about, seeking for that elusive something, a profitable profession, and when his aspirations made him dream of Thespis and his Cart, as he tells us more than once. These three plays were produced through the influence of his kind friends John Braham, the famous singer and proprietor of the St. James's Theatre; John Hullah, the composer; and John Pritt Harley, the great comedian of several generations—all Johns together, of which fact his large sense of humour no

doubt made Charles Dickens, their friend, duly appreciative

This trio of plays—"The Strange Gentleman," "The Village Coquettes," and "Is She His Wife?"—had a first hearing at the St. James's Theatre during the years 1836–1837. Of his other play, "The Lamplighter," which was never acted, I speak in the following pages, as also of "Mr. Nightingale's Diary," and "No Thoroughfare." Concerning the numberless adaptations and dramatisations from the novels of Dickens—and, personally, I never look upon them as novels, but as coloured pictures from life—I give the fullest information I have, in my enthusiasm and research, been able to accumulate with the assistance of many theatrical and literary friends, including Mr. S. O. Lloyd and Mr. Charles Collette. And I wish especially to acknowledge my indebtedness to my old friend Mr. Arthur Williams for much assistance in regard to the casts, many of which he has allowed me to copy from his own entertaining collection. In an interesting letter, Mr. Williams reminds me of many Dickens's parts he has himself played, including Tilly Slowboy, with Toole, 1867, at the T. R. Nottingham, "Dot"; also Bumble in "Oliver Twist," with Toole, same time; likewise The Artful Dodger, "Oliver Twist," at the Pavilion,

E., 1876; Guppy in "Poor Jo," same theatre, same date; Jerry Cruncher, in "Tale of Two Cities," same theatre, 1876; Gabriel Varden, in "Barnaby Rudge," Effingham Theatre, 1872; Uriah Heep and Micawber, "Little Em'ly," at the Crystal Palace; Mr. Toots, "Dombey and Son," Crystal Palace; Trotty Veck, "The Chimes," Pavilion, 1876; Caleb Plummer, "Dot," Yarmouth, 1877; Sam Weller, "Pickwick," Gaiety, 1881; Dick Swiveller, "Old Curiosity Shop," T. R. Nottingham, 1867, and many more beside.

In pursuing my expedition in the highways and byeways of Dickensland, I have come across many curious things, including a Sam Weller play founded upon "Pickwick Abroad," which was perpetrated as a continuation of Dickens's work by that notorious scribbler, G. W. M. Reynolds. This was compiled by W. T. Moncrieff, and presented at the Strand Theatre, with Hammond as Sam, early in July, 1838. Although it is spoken of as being "an inferior continuation of Boz's immortal works," yet it "is admirably acted, and is very well done in every respect, so that there is no doubt its career will be a long and successful one." Was ever a great novelist so shamefully treated by his fellow countrymen? I think I may quote here, in all fairness, the observations of a writer in *Figaro in London*, for

April 8th, 1837. He is speaking of the dramatisation of the "Pickwick Papers" at the Adelphi Theatre. The critic said: "We think that nothing could have been better chosen for dramatic effect than these inimitable papers; but we wish Boz himself had taken the trouble of dramatising those magnificent scenes, which none but himself ought to be allowed to interfere with. It is a profanation for any one to touch what, it is allowed by all, that there is no approaching."

Then making a jump forward, I find this amazing statement in a Melbourne magazine called the *Imperial*, 1895. "John Garraway, the audacious writer of a play on the loves of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, now comes out with something, if possible, more extraordinary, under the title 'Dickens: A Comedy.' This work is somewhat of the class of many produced by M. Antoine, at Theatre Libre, Paris; without any plot, but just the transcript of an episode, like Antoine's vivid presentation of the murder of the Duc d'Enghein."

Mr. Garraway's play, it appears, was in one act—whether performed or not deponent does not say—and set in one scene, which is behind the scenes, at the amateur performance given at the Manchester Town Hall of Wilkie Collins' "Frozen Deep," August, 1857. In this remarkable concoction are introduced

Mrs. Cowden Clarke and Miss Ternan, who played in several pieces with Dickens, and round this actress and Dickens is woven a slight love affair. Then John Forster, Douglas Jerrold, Mark Lemon also appear, and the writer in the *Imperial* adds: "Ambitious actors will have an opportunity in this piece of impersonating Thackeray, Macready, Bulwer Lytton, Leech, Phiz, Bob Romer, and Mr. Bradbury, the publisher, though they are terribly lay-figurish, and only feeders to Dickens as the Panjandrum."

I think that is enough of Mr. John Garraway and his precious comedy.

The influence of Dickens on the Victorian drama can scarcely be over-estimated. The majority of the works for the stage in the middle part of the nineteenth century were more or less dominated by his creations. As T. W. Robertson was influenced by the novels of Thackeray, so were H. T. Craven, Tom Taylor, Palgrave Simpson, Herman Merivale (in a way), Robert Reece, James Albery, and Henry J. Byron influenced by the works of Dickens, for all exhibit unconsciously the magnetism and imagery of his wonderful genius.

In the course of this work I make frequent mention of the name, Theodore Taylor. This was said to be the pen-name of John Camden Hotten, the publisher, whose business eventually became

merged into that of Messrs. Chatto and Windus. In the summer of 1870, there was published by Mr. Hotten, "Charles Dickens, the Story of his Life," by the author of "The Life of Thackeray." I found that the "Life of Thackeray" was attributed to Theodore Taylor, otherwise John Camden Hotten, so I naturally concluded that he was the author of the "Life of Dickens." In this I was mistaken. Then I received information from more than one quarter that Theodore Taylor was none other than the late W. Moy Thomas, which I thought feasible, as Mr. Thomas had written for Dickens in *Household Words* and *All the Year Round*, and for years also he was the highly esteemed dramatic critic of the *Daily News*. But once again I was led astray.

In the first edition of this particular "Life of Charles Dickens," I found in the "Preliminary," dated June 29th, 1870, this paragraph:—

"It would have been impossible to have given the data contained in this little book, in the rather short time occupied in its preparation, but for the hearty assistance of Mr. H. T. Taverner, an industrious *litterateur*, who had already gathered some particulars of the great novelist's public career." And now I am able to clear up the matter, and I give the explanation in Mr. Taverner's own words

under date October 8th, 1910. He states at once that Mr. Moy Thomas did not write the life of Charles Dickens for John Camden Hotten, and continues, "I commenced the work in 1860, and the MS. was in Mr. Hotten's hands on November 26th, 1867, and a further portion on September 30th, 1869; the printers had the MS. on June 11th, 1870, and the book was published on July 9th—one month after Dickens's death. Except the extracts from biographies, and the newspapers of June, 1870, nearly every line in it I wrote; Mr. Hotten wrote the preface. . . . He assured me more than once that he wrote 'The Life of Thackeray' under the pen-name of Theodore Taylor, and it was for this reason that my book did not bear my name as the author, but he made amends in the preface as to my share in its production, and the remuneration I received was ample."

That settles the point as far as "The Life of Charles Dickens" is concerned.

There have been many readers of Dickens's works, the first to follow in the footsteps of the Master himself being Mr. Clarance Holt and Mr. W. H. C. Nation. In later times Sir Squire Bancroft has made a speciality of the Christmas Books, giving prominence to the "Christmas Carol."

I have not touched upon Dickens as a dramatic

critic. But the curious in this matter will find articles from his pen on Grimaldi, William Charles Macready, Charles Fechter, Shakespeare's "King Lear," Douglas Jerrold's "Black Ey'd Susan," and other subjects dealing with the stage and the amusements of the people in the two extra volumes already referred to.

Amateur performances of original dramatisations from Dickens are constantly being given, especially by the members of The Dickens Fellowship; and I may draw attention to the clever published adaptations by Miss I. M. Pagan; to "Chamber Dramas," by Mrs. George MacDonald, one of which is a capital three-act play called "The Tetterbys"—a note to this effect is printed with it, "Mr. Dickens kindly gave consent to the use made in this play of part of his story of 'The Haunted Man'"; "Character Sketches from Dickens," by Jno. Wallace Junior; and especially to the twenty "Short Plays from Dickens," issued in one handy volume, as being peculiarly suitable for the use of amateur dramatic clubs and societies, skilfully prepared by Mr. Horace B. Browne, M.A., which are worthy of the carefullest consideration.

In conclusion I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. William Miller for some interesting items, and to tender my warmest thanks to Mr.

B. W. Matz, the editor of *The Dickensian*, who seems to have been cradled in the works of Dickens, for much valuable assistance during the progress of "Dickens and the Drama" through the press, and his hearty co-operation in the way of securing play-bills and pictures for reproduction.

S. J. Adair Fitz-Gerald.

Wimbledon,
November, 1910.

DICKENS AND THE DRAMA

CHAPTER I

EARLY DAYS OF DICKENS

APPARENTLY the interest in Charles Dickens and his works is destined to live for ever—for is not the great master of fiction already one of the immortals? And yet, to what an accident do we owe all his marvellous creations! Of course, all readers of Forster's "Life" of the Author of the "Pickwick Papers" know that his greatest ambition, when just beginning to decide upon his future career, was to become, not an author but—an actor! The theatrical side of Dickens's life has never been clearly explained, but what a vast sea of possibilities it contained! It will be remembered that he first attempted to win fame as a dramatist when he was hovering between sock and buskin and literature, as will be presently made evident.

Dickens's love of the drama became an ineradicable passion. From quite the earliest days he longed

to be a comedian, and tried very hard to see Charles Kemble with the object of adopting the stage as a profession. At about that time he was a parliamentary reporter for the *Morning Chronicle*, but the *cæcoethes scribendi* was already strong upon him, and he "commenced author" by having his first story, "A Dinner at Poplar Walk" (afterwards called "Mr. Minns and His Cousin"), published in the *Old Monthly Magazine*, December, 1833. He has described himself as dropping this paper stealthily one evening at twilight, with fear and trembling, into a dark letter-box in a dark office up a dark court in Fleet Street, and he has also given us particulars of his agitation when he saw the sketch in print. He received no payment for this nor for many subsequent contributions to the same journal. By the way, he did not use his well-known pseudonym Boz, until August, 1834, when it was attached to the paper entitled "The Boarding House."

But to return to his theatrical aspirations. It was really while perfecting himself in shorthand and working as a reporter at one of the offices in Doctor's Commons that Dickens first turned his attention to the stage. He was dissatisfied with the work and the meagre, uncertain pay, and so from having been an ardent playgoer he thought he would turn player. As he tells us himself, he went to the

theatres almost every night for a long time, and studied and practised many parts, and he was "so much attracted by the 'At-Homes' of the elder Mathews that he resolved to make offer of himself to Covent Garden." Consequently, as he says, in a letter to his life-long friend, John Forster, "I wrote to Bartley, who was stage manager, and told him how young I was and exactly what I thought I could do, and that I believed I had a strong perception of character and oddity, and a natural power of reproducing in my own person what I observed in others. This was at the time when I was at Doctor's Commons as a shorthand writer for the proctors. And I recollect I wrote the letter from a little office I had there, where the answer came. There must have been something in my letter that struck the authorities, for Bartley wrote to me almost immediately to say that they were busy getting up the 'Hunchback' (so they were), but that they would communicate with me again in a fortnight. Punctual to the time another letter came, with an appointment to do anything of Mathews's I pleased before him and Charles Kemble on a certain day at the theatre. My sister Fanny was in the secret, and was to go with me to play the songs. I was laid up when the day came with a terrible bad cold and inflammation of the face. . . .

I wrote to say so, and added that I would resume my application next season. I made a great splash in the gallery soon afterwards; the *Chronicle* opened to me; I had a distinction in the little world of the newspaper which made one like it; began to write; didn't want money; had never thought of the stage but as the means of getting it; gradually left off turning my thoughts that way and never resumed the idea."

There is the story in a nutshell. What a lucky thing for the world that he had that "terrible bad cold"! However, though he never became a professional actor, Charles Dickens made many successful appearances as an amateur. What the stage lost, mankind in general gained threefold.

I may add here, on the authority of the late Godfrey Turner, that Dickens at one time contemplated undertaking the desperate *rôle* of theatrical manager by leasing the old Strand Theatre. This was, of course, after he had made his name. Mr. Turner wrote: "Nothing would have restrained him from a rush into theatrical management but the solemn warning, which at that time, now far distant, he received from a man of law that he would be making himself liable for untold obligations."

Before entering upon the subject of Charles

Dickens's direct contributions to the stage and to his being voluntarily and involuntarily a dramatist, it will be more convenient to refer to him in the light of an actor at those many performances which he from time to time took part in—privately and publicly for various charitable purposes, and those most personal for the pleasure of his own children and his particular friends.

Of course, he had many good and bad criticisms passed upon his talents and methods. Mr. Turner expresses himself thus: "If he had been an actor, though a certain hardness and dry conventional exaggeration somewhat checked the natural flow of his humour—a suspicion of this conventionalism now and then appearing in his otherwise admirable reading of the 'Carol'—he must have shone in eccentric comedy."

Many competent critics who witnessed his performances declare that the great novelist had more than the makings of a fine actor in him—he was one. The reliable Dutton Cook wrote: "Dickens's literary successes soon induced him to abandon his intention of going upon the stage. . . . Yet he could not but bear in mind, long afterwards, how near he had once been to 'another sort of life.' Nor could he ever relinquish his old fondness for the actor's art. He obtained great applause as an amateur

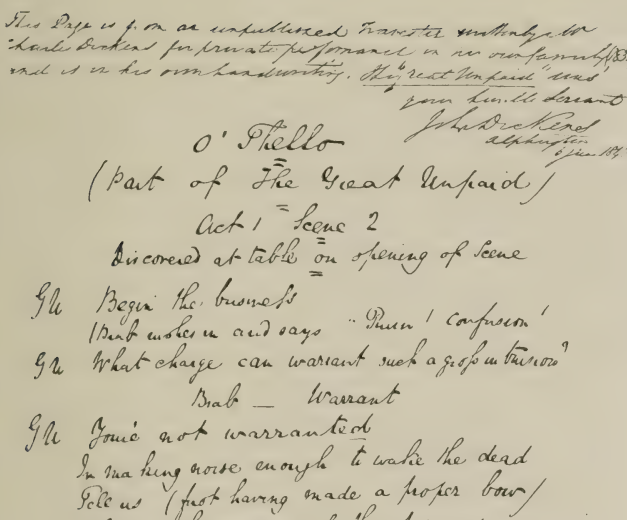
actor, and he became famous as a public reader of his own books; his readings, in truth, closely resembling 'actings,' or suggesting rather the readings of an actor than of an author. He was particular always on these occasions as to the arrangement of his gas-lights, that his expression and play of face might be properly seen and appraised. With this view, a special 'gas man' ever accompanied him upon his tours in the provinces. He resorted to much 'stage business,' and employed sundry 'stage properties,' where he judged that he could in such wise the better enforce or illustrate the intention of his books. The copies of his stories from which he read in public were marked with as many stage directions as are contained in the acting editions of a play. When but a lad of sixteen, with a fellow-clerk in a lawyer's office, he is understood to have assumed certain characters at a minor theatre—probably one of those establishments supported entirely by amateur actors such as then existed in Wilson Street, Grays Inn Lane, and in Catherine Street, Strand." One of these places is fully described in "Sketches by Boz," under the heading "Private Theatres," without the slightest exaggeration. The dramatic aspirant was able to gratify his ambitious vanity according to the size of his pocket—the bigger the part

the more he paid to make an exhibition of himself. And, by the way, as late as 1840, and perhaps later, there stood at the corner of White Hart Street, Catherine Street (now demolished), Strand, a private theatre, rejoicing in the noble and classic nomenclature of the Royal Pantheon, where many an amateur who later became famous strutted his anxious hour. Indeed, many of these establishments flourished for years until amateurs took to hiring more pretentious halls and theatres for their performances. A small volume, published in 1885, from the pen of W. C. Day, entitled "Behind the Footlights," and illustrated by G. Brinsley Le Fanu, is full of information about these vanished temples of Thespis.

When a mere child, Dickens wrote a tragedy called "Misnar, the Sultan of India," undoubtedly founded on one of the chapters in "Tales of the Genii," a rare book, which formed part of his precious library at Chatham. In after years, when attending to his first attempts at dramatic authorship, as we are reminded by F. G. Kitton, "achieved at the mature age of eight or ten," he said, "they were represented with great applause to overflowing nurseries." At Wellington House Academy he got up the inevitable "Miller and His Men," in quite a magnificent manner, and he took "prominent

parts in theatrical representations planned by himself and his fellow-pupils, the plays being acted with much solemnity before an audience of boys, and in the presence of the ushers."

In 1833, when his mind was largely engrossed on the first "Sketches by Boz," he wrote a burlesque of Shakespeare's terrific tragedy "Othello," which he christened "The O'Thello," which was privately played for the benefit of his brothers and sisters and parents and friends. When the "O'Thello" had been launched, performed, and done with, Charles Dickens again became busy with theatrical matters, and was not only the stage manager, but also the chief performer in a "Private Theatricals" entertainment, of which a copy of the very rare bill is reproduced on another page. This is certainly the earliest play-bill in which Dickens's name appears known to be extant. A careful perusal will disclose that in his enthusiasm he enrolled all his own intimate friends and relations under his dramatic banner. For instance, John Dickens was his father; Miss Dickens was his sister Fanny; Miss L. (Letitia) Dickens, another sister, who married later the Mr. H. Austin mentioned, while Frederick and Augustus were, of course, his younger brothers. Mr. E. Barrow was presumably a cousin, as Dickens's mother's maiden name was Barrow.


This Page is from an unpublished Farce written and acted by Mr Charles Dickens for private performance in our own family (1839) and is in his own handwriting. The "Great Unpaid" was

your humble Servant
John Dickens
Alphington
9 Jan 1839

O' Thello
(Part of The Great Unpaid)

Act 1 Scene 2

Discovered at table on opening of Scene

Gh Begin the business
Bnb rushes in and says "Ruin! confusion!"
Gh What charge can warrant such a groping terror?
Bnb — Warrant
Gh You're not warranted
In making noise enough to wake the dead
Tell us (first having made a proper bow)
What is the meaning of this precious row
Bnb — stole my daughter
Gh Who has done this?
Bnb — O' Thello
Gh Enter the man in
(Music: wait till he comes & music stops)
And now command silence
What can you say in your own defence?

FACSIMILE OF A PAGE OF THE MANUSCRIPT OF "O'THELLO," WITH CERTIFICATE OF AUTHENTICITY BY HIS FATHER, JOHN DICKENS.

[To face p. 8.

Mr. Walter Herries Pollock writes: "It is a legend at the Theatre Royal, Portsmouth—and there may well be truth in it—that Dickens, as a *very* young man, was for a time a member of the company. This was told me a few years ago by one in authority there, who was on most amicable terms with me because of my intimacy with dear old Toole, who was then playing there for a week. This personage showed me a playbill which was, no doubt, the origin of the Crummles bills. He told me," continues Mr. Pollock, as quoted by F. G. Kitton, "that he himself well remembered the original of Folair, hardly caricatured in the novel, and showed me his name in the bill. It was 'Billy Floyer.' My friendly informant spoke of this as a tradition in which he personally believed from putting together the long life of the tradition—and the playbill—and the exact description in 'Nicholas Nickleby' of the old Portsmouth Theatre—the Crummleses and Folair." The story is also current in Portsmouth that Dickens, when visiting that seaport town with Forster at the time "Nicholas Nickleby" was in the making, "went on" the stage at this theatre and asked for a small part. This may be true or not. I should say that had the rising young novelist really desired to appear, a vacancy for the experiment would have been found

for him. It has been surmised that he simply went behind the scenes to chat with the players and to make himself agreeably welcome as usual. But, as we shall see later, he really did belong to a theatrical troupe run by Davenport.

It is generally accepted that Charles Dickens first gained his laurels as an actor at the Queen's Theatre, Montreal, during his first visit to America in 1842; but Theodore Taylor (which is supposed to have been the *nom de guerre* of John Camden Hotten, the publisher, though I now know that Mr. H. T. Taverner was the real writer), who wrote the first published life of the novelist at the end of June, 1870, says definitely, "Dickens's extreme fondness for theatricals had tempted him to the boards as far back as the year 1836, when 'Pickwick' was publishing, to take a part in 'The Strange Gentleman,' at St. James's Theatre." This, although it is denied on very good authority, is not at all improbable. "The Strange Gentleman" was one of Dickens's own burlettas, and very likely he played for a time one of the three waiters of the St. James's Arms, where the scene of the play is laid. Besides, Dickens's joyous spirit would delight in such an adventure, and he was an especial favourite with John Pritt Harley, the chief comedian in King's Street, St. James's.

Private Theatricals.

STAGE MANAGER, MR. CHARLES DICKENS.

ON SATURDAY EVENING, APRIL 27, 1833,

At Seven o'clock precisely. The performances will commence with

AN INTRODUCTORY PROLOGUE;

THE PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS BY

MR. EDWARD BARROW, MR. MILTON, MR. CHARLES DICKENS, MISS AUSTIN AND MISS DICKENS.

IMMEDIATELY AFTER WHICH WILL BE PRESENTED THE OPERA OF

CLARI.

The Duke Vivaldi	MR BRAMWELL.
Rolamo, a Farmer, (Father to Clari)	MR C DICKENS.
Jocoso, (Valet to the Duke)	MR H AUSTIN.
Nicolo	MR MILTON.
Geronso	MR E BARROW
Nimpedo	MR R AUSTIN.
Pages to the Duke	MASTERS F DICKENS & A. DICKENS.
Clari	MISS DICKENS.
Fidalma (her Mother)	MISS L DICKENS.
Fespino	MISS AUSTIN.
Nanetta	MISS OPPENHEIM

CHARACTERS IN THE EPISODE.

The Nobleman	MR HENRY KOLLE.
Pelgrino, a Farmer	MR. JOHN DICKENS.
Wife of Pelgrino	MISS URQUHART.
Leoda	MISS OPPENHEIM.

AFTER WHICH THE FAVOURITE INTERLUDE OF

The Married Bachelor.

Sir Charles Courtall	MR. C. DICKENS.
Sharp	MR. JOHN URQUHART.
Lady Courtall	MISS L. DICKENS.
Grace	MISS DICKENS.

TO CONCLUDE WITH THE FARCE OF

Amateurs & Actors.

David Dudeen, Esq (a Musical Dramatic Amateur, who employs Mr. O. P. Bustle, and attaches to Theatricals and Miss Mary Hardacre)	MR H. AUSTIN.
Mr O P Bustle, (a Provincial Manager, but engaged to superintend some Private Theatricals)	MR BRAMWELL.
Wing, (a poor Country Actor)	MR C DICKENS.
Berry, (an Actor for the heavy Business)	MR. BOSTON.
Elderberry, (a retired Manufacturer, simple in wit and manners, and utterly unacquainted with Theatricals)	MR. J. DICKENS.
Tinkins, (Elderberry's Factotum)	MR R. AUSTIN.
Geoffry Muffincap, (an elderly Charity Boy, let out as a Servant at Bustle's Lodging)	MR E BARROW.
Miss Mary Hardacre, (a fugitive Ward of Elderberry's	MISS DICKENS.
Mrs. Mary General, (a Strolling Tragedy Actress, and a serious evil to her Husband)	MISS OPPENHEIM

The Scenery by Messrs. H. Austin, Milton, H Kolle, and Assistants.——The Band which will be numerous and complete, under the direction of Mr E Barrow.

J. & G. Rubels, Printers, Earl's Court, Cranbourn Street, Soho.

FACSIMILE OF PLAY-BILL OF PRIVATE THEATRICALS.

[*To face p.* 10.

CHAPTER II

AS AN AMATEUR ACTOR

THE plays chosen to be represented in Montreal with the officers of the garrison for the benefit of a charity, were "A Roland for an Oliver," "Two O'clock in the Morning"—a favourite piece with Charles Mathews, his great idol, and "Deaf as a Post." Writing to John Forster, on May 26th, 1842, Charles Dickens says enthusiastically: "The play came off last night. The audience, between five and six hundred strong, were invited as to a party, a regular table with refreshments being spread in the lobby and saloon. We had the band of the Twenty-Third (one of the finest in the service) in the orchestra, the theatre was lighted with gas, the scenery was excellent, and the properties were all brought from private houses." Dickens took the precaution to send to New York for a wig. Now here is an important point as to his acting activities: "If they had done 'Love, Law, and Physick,' as at first proposed, I was already 'up' in Flexible, having

played it of old, before my authorship days; but if it should be Splash in the 'Young Widow,' you will have to do me the favour to imagine me in a smart livery coat, shiny black hat and cockade, white knee-cords, white top boots, blue stock, small whip, red cheeks and dark eyebrows."

However, as neither of these pieces, which he had presumably acted in at the private theatre already alluded to, were given, he had to study other parts. He evidently worked very hard to make the entertainment at Montreal a success. "I am not, however," he exclaims, "let me tell you, placarded as a stage-manager for nothing. Everybody was told they would have to submit to the most iron despotism; and didn't I come Macready over them? Oh, no. By no means. Certainly not. The pains I have taken with them, and the perspiration I have expended, during the last ten days, exceed in amount anything you can imagine. I had regular plots of the scenery made out, and lists of the properties wanted; and had them nailed up by the prompter's chair. Every letter that was to be delivered was written, every piece of money that had to be given, provided; and not a single thing lost sight of. I prompted myself, when I was not on; when I was, I made the regular prompter of the theatre my deputy; and I never

Private Theatricals.

COMMITTEE.

Mrs. TORRENS. | Mrs. PERRY.
W. C. ERMATINGER, Esq. | Captain TORRENS.
THE EARL OF MULGRAVE.

STAGE MANAGER--MR. CHARLES DICKENS.

QUEEN'S THEATRE, MONTREAL.

ON WEDNESDAY EVENING, MAY 25TH, 1842,
WILL BE PERFORMED,

A ROLAND FOR AN OLIVER.

MRS. SELBORNE. —— Mrs Torrens
MARIA DARLINGTON. —— Miss Griffin
MRS. FIXTURE. —— Miss Ermatinger.

MR. SELBORNE. —— Lord Mulgrave
ALFRED HIGHFLYER. —— Mr Charles Dickens
SIR MARK CHASE. —— Honorable Mr Matthews
FIXTURE. —— Captain Willoughby.
GAMEKEEPER. —— Captain Granville

AFTER WHICH, AN INTERLUDE IN ONE SCENE, (FROM THE FRENCH,) CALLED

Past Two o'Clock in the Morning.

THE STRANGER. —— Captain Granville
MR. SNOBBINGTON. —— Mr Charles Dickens

TO CONCLUDE WITH THE FARCE, IN ONE ACT, ENTITLED

DEAF AS A POST.

MRS. PLUMPLEY. —— Mrs Torrens
AMY TEMPLETON. —— Mrs Charles Dickens!!!!!!!!
SOPHY WALTON. —— Mrs Perry.
SALLY MAGGS. —— Miss Griffin

CAPTAIN TEMPLETON. —— Captain Torrens
MR. WALTON. —— Captain Willoughby.
TRISTRAM SAPPY. —— Doctor Griffin
CRUPPER. —— Lord Mulgrave
GALLOP. —— Mr Charles Dickens.

MONTREAL, May 24, 1842. GAZETTE OFFICE.

FACSIMILE OF PLAY-BILL OF PRIVATE THEATRICALS AT MONTREAL, SHOWING NAMES OF PERFORMERS IN DICKENS'S HANDWRITING.

[*To face p.* 12.

saw anything so perfectly touch-and-go as the first two pieces. The bedroom scene in the interlude was as well furnished as Vestris had it; with a 'practicable' fireplace blazing away like mad, and everything in a concatenation accordingly. I really do believe that I was very funny: at least, I know that I laughed heartily at myself, and made the part a character such as you and I know very well." And so on to the same effect. Mrs. Dickens played in "Deaf as a Post," and played very well. Dickens himself performed in all three pieces, and was a great success. His enthusiasm and hard work must have been infectious. "Thoroughness" was the keynote in all he did. And he was always full of the same energy whenever he undertook the management and production of any comedy or drama. Frequently he would not only "produce" the piece, as they say nowadays, but he would also invent the costumes and design the scenery—and be head of everything. Before he appeared on the stage again three years elapsed, during which time he wrote his "American Notes," "Martin Chuzzlewit," and the "Christmas Carol," and, incidentally, a prologue to Westland Marston's "Patrician's Daughter," which Macready brought out at Drury Lane Theatre, December 10th, 1842.

Westland Marston at this time was an unknown

dramatist, and the "Patrician's Daughter" was his maiden effort. Dickens read the printed play prior to its production, and evidently being struck with its cleverness, indicated a desire to assist the young author on his road to success by writing some introductory lines. So he wrote to Macready: "The more I think of Marston's play, the more I feel that a prologue to the purpose would help it materially, and almost decide the fate of any ticklish point on the first night. Now, I have an idea (not easily explainable in writing, but told in five words) that would take the prologue out of the conventional dress of prologues quite. Get the curtain up with a dash, and begin the play with a sledge-hammer blow. If, on consideration, you should agree with me, I will write the prologue heartily." Although the piece, being a tragedy in modern dress, was a fair success, the experiment was not encouraging. But the kindness of Dickens was there. Macready spoke the prologue, which begins—

"No tale of streaming plumes and harness bright
Dwells on the poet's maiden harp to-night;
No trumpet's clamour and no battle's fire
Breathes in the accents of his lyre;
Enough for him, if in his lowly strain
He wakes one household echo not in vain;
Enough for him, if in his boldest word
The beating heart of man be dimly heard."

* * * * *

The two last lines being—

> "Not light its import and not poor its mien;
> Yourselves the actors, and your homes their scene."

But "The Patrician's Daughter" did not run long. Its method came before its time, and was soon forgotten.

After a long sojourn in Italy, where he made himself thoroughly acquainted with the Italian theatres and the opera, to say nothing of their puppets, which completely enraptured his fantastic fancy, Dickens was at home again in June, 1845, writing in this strain: "Are we to have that play? Have I spoken of it ever since I came from London as a settled thing? (The subject was first mooted in the previous December.) I do not know if I have ever told you seriously, but I have often thought that I should certainly have been as successful on the boards as I have been between them. I assure you that when I was on the stage at Montreal (not having played for years) I was as much astonished at the reality and ease, to myself, of what I did as if I had been another man. See how oddly things turn out." Strange that he should have so constantly harped upon this one string. And yet when once one has smelt the footlights one never forgets—the taste in always there.

However, by July 22nd the play "Every Man

in His Humour," by Ben Jonson, was selected and cast, and the theatre all but engaged. For this the co-operation of his friends on the staff of "Punch" was secured, and the piece was duly presented at the Royalty Theatre by a most distinguished company of amateurs, each of whom was a "somebody," but not one member of which survives. Miss Kelly, one of the genuine old school of professionals, was the proprietor of the little house in Dean Street—which, to be candid, she badly managed, through paying too much heed to her own whims and fancies. Dickens had an interview with her to arrange preliminaries, and this is how he describes it: "Heavens! such a scene as I have had with Miss Kelly, this morning! She wanted us put off until the theatre should be cleaned and brushed up a bit, and she would and she would not, for she is eager to have us and alarmed when she thinks of us. By the foot of Pharaoh, it was a great scene! Especially when she choked and had the glass of water brought. She exaggerates the importance of our occupation, dreads the least prejudice against her establishment in the minds of any of our company, says the place already has quite ruined her, and, with tears in her eyes, protests that any jokes at her additional expense in print would drive her mad. By the body of Cæsar,

the scene was incredible! It's like a preposterous dream!" As to the jokes, poor Miss Kelly evidently had Mark Lemon and the irrepressible humour of "Punch" in her mind. Miss Francis Maria Kelly was a famous actress in her day, and was a great friend of Charles Lamb. She lived to the good old age of ninety-three, and passed away in 1882.

On September 21, 1845, then, "Every Man in His Humour" was presented at the Royalty Theatre, with the following cast:—

KNOWELL (*an old gentleman*) ..	Mr. Henry Mayhew.
EDWARD KNOWELL (*his son*) ..	Mr. Frederick Dickens.
BRAINWORM (*the father's man*)	Mr. Mark Lemon.
GEORGE DOWNRIGHT (*a plain squire*)	Mr. Dudley Costello.
WELLBRED (*his half-brother*) ..	Mr. George Cattermole.
KITELY (*a merchant*)	Mr. John Forster.
CAPTAIN BOBADIL (*a Paul's man*)	Mr. Charles Dickens.
MASTER STEPHEN (*a country gull*)	Mr. Douglas Jerrold.
MASTER MATHEW (*the town gull*)	Mr. John Leech.
THOMAS CASH (*Kitely's cashier*)	Mr. Augustus Dickens.
OLIVER COBB (*a water-bearer*) ..	Mr. Percival Leigh.
JUSTICE CLEMENT (*an old merry magistrate*)	Mr. Frank Stone.
ROGER FORMAL (*his clerk*) ..	Mr. Evans.
WILLIAM	Mr. Gilbert Abbot A'Beckett.
JAMES	Mr. W. B. Jerrold.
DAME KITELY (*Kitely's wife*) ..	Miss Fortescue.
MISTRESS BRIDGET (*her sister*)	Miss Hinton.
TIB (*Cobb's wife*)	Miss Bew.

I may state at once that this Royalty cast has

never been accurately presented before. John Forster does not give it, nor does F. G. Kitton, nor T. E. Pemberton. Later the performance was repeated at the St. James's Theatre, on November 15th. On the playbill on this occasion it is stated, "His Royal Highness *Prince* Albert has been pleased to express his intention of being present." Mr. W. Eaton replaced Mr. A'Beckett as William, otherwise the cast was the same as at the Royalty. The concluding item was "Two O'clock in the Morning," with Charles Dickens as Snobbington and Mark Lemon as The Stranger.

Dickens, in Ben Jonson's admirable comedy made such an excellent Captain Bobadil that Charles Robert Leslie, R.A., painted a most realistic picture of him in that character. The moment selected is when Captain Bobadil shouts out—

"A gentleman! Odds so, I am not within."

I am under the impression that "Every Man in His Humour" was given twice at the St. James's Theatre—the second time for some charity, unnamed. Before the close of 1845, Charles Dickens and his company gave a performance of Beaumont and Fletcher's "Elder Brother." The St. James's Theatre at this time was in a very parlous state, and all sorts of performances took place—amateur and otherwise. However, the regular season began

CHARLES DICKENS AS CAPTAIN BOBADIL IN BEN JONSON'S "EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR."

From a painting by C. R. Leslie, R.A.

[*To face p.* 18.

again on December 6th with comedy and farce, interleaved, so to speak, with Robert Harden's "Soirees Fantastiques."

It was generally conceded that the amateurs were far above the average. Mark Lemon had most of the stuff, conventional and otherwise, of a regular actor about him, while Dickens was looked upon as a born comedian, his strength being more in the vividness and variety of his assumptions than in the completeness of his portraiture. He had studied Charles Mathews to excellent purpose. This "enabled him to present in Bobadil, after a richly coloured picture of bombastical extravagance and comical exaltation in the earlier scenes, a contrast in the later of tragical humility and abasement that had a wonderful effect." As a stage-manager, and as master of all the mechanical and technical needs, he received from all the most unstinted praise.

In 1847 it was decided to organise a theatrical benefit on behalf of Leigh Hunt, to whom, however, a civil list pension of two hundred a year was granted by Lord John Russell just as the announcement of the intention to assist had been made. However, it was still decided to give some performances out of London to clear off past liabilities and "enable a delightful writer better to enjoy the easier the future that had at last been opened to him." At

the same time they were all anxious to lend a helping hand to John Poole the dramatist, who had fallen upon evil days—John Poole who wrote the never-to-be-forgotten popular play of "Paul Pry." It was resolved to give two representations of Ben Jonson's comedy—one at Manchester, and one at Liverpool. Amongst the strolling players besides Dickens there were Henry Mayhew, Mark Lemon, George Cattermole, John Forster, John Leech, Douglas Jerrold, Frank Stone, Augustus Egg, Dudley Costello, George Henry Lewes, and George Cruikshank. At Manchester, on July 26th, therefore, was presented "Every Man in His Humour," with "A Good Night's Rest," and "Turning the Tables." Prior to the chief event, Dickens stepped forward and delivered a prologue written by Thomas Noon Talfourd. While at Liverpool he gave one specially written by Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton. At Liverpool the farce was "Comfortable Lodgings; or, Paris in 1750." Once more "Every Man in His Humour" was done with a charitable object in view—this time on May 17th, 1848, in aid of "The Fund for the Endowment of a Perpetual Curatorship of Shakespeare's House," at the Theatre Royal, Haymarket. The cast was identical with that of Manchester and Liverpool, except that Mrs. Cowden-Clarke, who wrote the splendid Shakespeare

Concordance, played Tib, while Miss Fortescue and Miss Kenworthy were the Dame Kitely and Mistress Bridget respectively. Again the critics were enthusiastic, and said that "such a Bobadil as that of Mr. Dickens had not been seen within the memory of living man," while Mrs. Cowden-Clarke described the acting of the braggart Captain as a veritable piece of genius, and Leigh Hunt considered that it had "a spirit in it of intellectual apprehension beyond anything existing on the stage." At the Haymarket the *pièce de resistance* was followed by "Love, Law, and Physic," by James Kenney, with Dickens as Flexible. This performance realised three hundred and nineteen pounds fourteen shillings. By the way, at the sale of the theatrical effects of J. L. Toole, 1906, in the prompt copy of "Every Man in His Humour," prepared by Charles Dickens, fetched eleven sovereigns.

In the *Theatrical Times* for Saturday, July 31st, 1847, appeared this interesting paragraph: "Miss Kelly's. We witnessed a rehearsal here a few evenings ago; and although, of course, we are not at liberty to criticise it, we must express our admiration of the performances of Dickens in Bobadil, Jerrold in Master Stephen, Mark Lemon in Brainworm, etc. In 'Turning the Tables,' Dickens was capital, and Miss Kelly supported him with admirable humour."

CHAPTER III.

MANY PERFORMANCES.

SEVERAL fresh schemes for more productions were gone into in the year 1848, and such plays as the "Alchemist," which was rehearsed and Dickens cast for Sir Epicure Mammon, in which it is thought he would shine; "Beggar's Bush"; Goldsmith's "Good Natured Man," which is always worth reviving; Douglas Jerrold's striking drama, "The Rent Day," and Lord Lytton's "Money," were carefully considered and eventually abandoned for the "Merry Wives of Windsor," in which Mark Lemon played Falstaff without padding! Forster played Ford, and Dickens Justice Shallow. Altogether nine performances of Shakespeare's comedy, supplemented by Kenney's "Love, Law, and Physic," were given at Manchester, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Birmingham, and Glasgow, two of which occurred in London at the Haymarket. At the second representation in the metropolis, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert were present. The first production was at the Haymarket, on April 15th,

while the final one of this "tour" took place at Glasgow on July 20th. Dickens was, of course, the prime mover. "His animal spirits, unresting and supreme authority, were the attraction at rehearsal at morning, and on the stage at night. At the quiet, early dinner, and the more jovial, unrestrained supper, where all engaged were assembled daily, his was the brightest face, the lightest step, the pleasantest word. There seemed to be no rest to that wonderful vitality."

In "Recollections of Writers," Mrs. Cowden-Clarke, speaking of the rehearsals, says, "Charles Dickens, ever-present, superintending, directing, with sleepless activity and vigilance: the essence of punctuality and methodical precision himself, he kept incessant watch that others should be unfailingly attentive and careful throughout. Unlike most professional rehearsals, where waiting about, dawdling, and losing time seem to be the order of the day, the rehearsals under Charles Dickens's stage-managership were strictly devoted to work—serious, earnest work; the consequence was that when the evening's performance came, the pieces went off with a smoothness and polish that belong only to finished stage-business and practised performers. He was always there, among the first arrivers at rehearsals, and remained in a conspicuous

position during their progress till the very last moment of conclusion. He had a small table placed rather to one side of the stage, at which he generally sat as the scenes went on in which he himself took no part. On this table rested a moderate-sized box, its interior divided into convenient compartments for holding papers, letters, etc., and their interior was always the very pink of neatness and orderly arrangement. Occasionally he would leave his seat at the managerial table, and stand with his back to the footlights in the very centre of the front of the stage, and view the whole effect of the rehearsal performance as it proceeded, observing the attitudes and positions of those engaged in the dialogue and their mode of entrance and exit, etc., etc. He never seemed to overlook anything, but to note the very slightest point that conduced to the 'well-going' of the whole performance. With all his supervision, however, it was pleasant to remark the utter absence of dictatorialness or arrogation of superiority that distinguished his mode of ruling his troop: he exerted his authority firmly and perpetually, but in such a manner as to make it universally felt to be for no purpose of self-assertion or self-importance; on the contrary, to be for the sole purpose of ensuring general success to their united efforts."

Many Performances

For just upon two years Charles Dickens kept to his books, sending forth "Dombey and Son," the Christmas story called "The Haunted Man," and, above all, "David Copperfield," which many consider his best story, being certainly composed in a more or less biographical frame of mind. "David Copperfield" was his own favourite—and I think it is most people's, though it is not so brilliant as "A Tale of Two Cities." In 1850 "Household Words" was projected and launched, and then returned the restless desire for play-acting again—his hobby, his diversion, and his delight.

At Knebworth, Lord Lytton's beautiful mansion, commencing November 18th, 1850, there were three repetitions of "Every Man in His Humour," with the cast almost identical with that already given. The changes were in the parts of Knowell, which was taken by Mr. Delmé Radcliffe and Edward Knowell by Mr. Henry Hawkins, afterwards to be Lord Chief Justice of England. The ladies' parts were played by Miss Anne Romer, Miss Hogarth, and Mrs. Mark Lemon, who replaced Mrs. Dickens, who had acted Tib during the trip in the country. She was disabled by an accident from appearing. The after-piece was Mrs. Inchbald's "Animal Magnetism."

For a long time Dickens had cherished the idea

of forming some sort of institution or society for the benefit and advantage of all writers and artists, and at Knebworth the scheme took shape; it was resolved to get up special entertainments to create an endowment fund, and so, tentatively at any rate, came into existence the "Guild of Literature and Art." Lord Lytton (then Sir Edward) specially wrote a five-act comedy, called "Not so Bad as We Seem," and Dickens was to prepare a farce. "In a few months," according to John Forster, "everything was ready, except a farce which Dickens was to have written to follow the comedy, and which unexpected cares of management and preparation were held to absolve him from." There were other reasons. "I have written the first scene," he wrote, "and it has points droll in it, more farcical points than you commonly find in farces—really better. Yet I am constantly striving, for my reputation's sake, to get into it a meaning that is impossible in a farce; constantly thinking of it, therefore against the grain, and constantly impressed with a conviction that I could never act in it myself with that wild abandonment which can alone carry a farce off. Wherefore I have confessed to Bulwer Lytton, and asked for absolution." There was substituted a new farce of Lemon's, to which, however, Dickens soon contributed so many

jokes and so much Gampish and other fun of his own, that it came to be in effect a joint piece of authorship. This play was called "Mr. Nightingale's Diary." "Mr. Nightingale's Diary," of which more later, was printed in pamplet form in 1851, and will be found in "Miscellaneous Papers—Plays and Poems."

The new programme being at last settled and everything perfectly ready, after much hard labour on all sides, the performance took place at Devonshire House, through the courtesy and kindness of the Duke of Devonshire, on May 27th, 1851, before Queen Victoria and the Prince Consort and a very large audience. The comedy, perhaps, was not wisely chosen, as it proved too long, and, to tell the truth, somewhat tedious. However, it was all for a good cause, and the success was considerable enough to encourage its transference to the Hanover Square Rooms, where, after a series of representations, it was performed by these gifted strollers in the country. I append a copy of one of the bills of the play of this very unique affair.

HANOVER SQUARE ROOMS.

On Wednesday Evening, June 18th, 1851.

THE AMATEUR COMPANY OF THE GUILD OF LITERATURE AND ART.

To encourage Life Assurance, and other Provident habits among Authors and Artists; to render such assistance

to both as shall never compromise their independence; and to found a new Institution where honourable rest from arduous labour shall still be associated with the discharge of congenial duties;

We have the Honour of Performing for the Third Time a New Comedy in Five Acts, by Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, Bart., called—

NOT SO BAD AS WE SEEM;
or, MANY SIDES TO A CHARACTER.

THE DUKE OF MIDDLESEX ..	Mr. Frank Stone.
THE EARL OF LOFTUS	Mr. Dudley Costello.

(*Peers attached to the son of James II., commonly called the First Pretender.*)

LORD WILMOT (*a young Man at the head of the Mode more than a century ago, son to Lord Loftus*)	Mr. Charles Dickens.
MR. SHADOWLY SOFTHEAD (*a young gentleman from the City, Friend and Double of Lord Wilmot*)	Mr. Douglas Jerrold.
MR. HARDMAN (*a Rising Member of Parliament and adherent to Sir Robert Walpole*) ..	Mr. John Forster.
SIR GEOFFREY THORNSIDE (*a gentleman of good family and estate*)	Mr. Mark Lemon.
MR. GOODENOUGH EASY (*in business, highly respectable, and a friend of Sir Geoffrey*) ..	Mr. F. W. Topham.
LORD LE TRIMMER	Mr. Peter Cunningham.
SIR THOMAS TIMID	Mr. Westland Marston.
COLONEL FLINT	Mr. R. H. Horne.
SMART (*valet to Lord Wilmot*) ..	Mr. Wilkie Collins.
HODGE (*servant to Sir Geoffrey Thornside*)	Mr. John Tenniel.

PADDY O'SULLIVAN (*Mr. Fallen's Landlord*)	Mr. Robert Bell.
MR. DAVID FALLEN (*Grub Street author and pamphleteer*) ..	Mr. Augustus Egg.
LORD STRONGBOW, SIR JOHN BRUIN, COFFEE HOUSE LOUNGERS, DRAWERS, WATCHMEN AND NEWSMEN.	
LUCY (*daughter to Sir Geoffery Thornside*)	Mrs. Henry Compton.
BARBARA (*daughter to Mr. Easy*)	Miss Young.
THE SILENT LADY OF DEADMAN'S LANE	Mrs. Coe.

There is no need to detail the scenery, which was painted by well-known artists of the day, including David Roberts, R.A., Clarkson Stanfield, W. Telbin, and Thomas Grieve.

The performance concluded with an original farce in one act by Mr. Charles Dickens and Mr. Mark Lemon, called—

MR. NIGHTINGALE'S DIARY.

MR. NIGHTINGALE	Mr. Dudley Costello.
MR. GABBLEWIG (*of the Middle Temple*)	Mr. Charles Dickens.
TIP (*his tiger*)	Mr. Augustus Egg.
SLAP (*professionally, Mr. Florminville*)	Mr. Mark Lemon.
LITHERS (*landlord of the Water Lily*)	Mr. Wilkie Collins.
ROSINA	Miss Ellen Chaplin.
SUSAN	Mrs. Coe.

During the progress of the country tour the chief piece was considerably altered and cut, and in the

printed copy many changes are indicated, which were no doubt judiciously contrived by Charles Dickens with the author's cognisance.

From Mr. R. H. Horne's "Recollections of Contemporaries" I extract the following interesting particulars concerning the production at Devonshire House :—

"The Duke gave us the use of his large picture-gallery, to be fitted up with seats for the audience ; and his library adjoining for the erection of the theatre. The latter room being longer than required for the stage and the scenery, the back portion of it was screened off for a 'green room.' Sir Joseph Paxton was most careful in the erection of the theatre and seats. There was a special box for the Queen. None of the valuable paintings in the picture-gallery (arranged for the auditorium) were removed ; but all were faced with planks and covered with silk velvet draperies. Dickens was unanimously chosen general manager and Mark Lemon stage-manager. We had a professional gentleman for prompter (Mr. Coe, of the Haymarket Theatre) as none of the amateurs could be trusted with so technical, ticklish, and momentous a duty. Never in the world of theatres was a better manager than Charles Dickens. Without, of course, questioning the superiority of Goethe (in the Weimar Theatre)

as a manager in all matters of high-class dramatic literature, one cannot think he could have been so excellent in all general requirements, stage effects, and practical details. Equally assiduous and unwearying as Dickens, surely very few men never were, or could possibly be. He appeared almost ubiquitous and sleepless."

Amongst those who attended the first performance were, besides Her Majesty Queen Victoria and Prince Albert, the Duke of Wellington, Lord Macaulay, Chevalier Bunsen, and a number of other notabilities. The character assigned to Dickens in the comedy was that of Lord Wilmot, described in the bill, as above, as " a young man at the head of the mode more than a century ago," a part which conceivably did not suit him, and indeed that was the impression of those present and who acted with him. He was quite too modern in all things. " His bearing on the stage," we are told, " and the tone of his voice were too rigid, hard, and quarter-deck-like for such ' rank and fashion,' while his make-up (in three-cornered cocked hat, black-curled wig, huge sleeve-cuffs, long-flapped waistcoat, knee-breeches, etc.) he failed to carry off with the proper air, and caused him to appear more like the captain of a Dutch privateer." In the farce, however, he appears to have been inimitable, and Miss Mitford,

the authoress of "Our Village," who witnessed the play, pronounced certain parts of his acting as something wonderful. He impersonated Mr. Gabblewig on the first occasion; but according to the cast printed on the playbill, when "Mr. Nightingale's Diary" was revived at Tavistock House in 1855, he more than doubled the part, for we find that (under the *nom de théâtre* of Mr. Crummles) he personified no less than five individuals besides that of Mr. Gabblewig—one of them being a deaf sexton, Sam Weller, and another, a Mrs. Gamp-like character, "assuming different disguises and changing his dress, voice, and look with a rapidity which the most practised entertainer might envy." Readers of the published play will easily understand these remarks.

F. G. Kitton, in chatty fashion, tells this anecdote: "Ah, Sir, it's a universal observation in the profession, Sir, that it was a great loss to the public when you took to writing books," and continues, "Such was the pregnant remark addressed to Dickens by the master-carpenter at one of the theatres, while shaking his head with an intensely mournful air. Although complimentary to his dramatic ability, Dickens could hardly be expected to accept this observation as a flattering tribute to his genius as an author, the more especially as

'Copperfield' had then been recently published. The deliberate opinion of the master-carpenter was the outcome of some 'wonderful ideas' that Dickens explained to him respecting certain contrivances which he (the novelist) had conceived for adapting the difficulties of a comedietta entitled 'Used Up' to a small stage." This piece was by Charles Mathews, and was privately performed at Rockingham Castle early in 1851, with Charles Dickens as Sir Charles Coldstream, and one who saw it spoke of his representation of that character as being more than excellent. The ennui of Sir Charles, his mental inanity, the voraciousness of his appetite when he assumed the garb and functions of a ploughboy, were so admirably rendered that his American friend, Mr. J. T. Fields, believed it impossible for even Mathews himself to have surpassed it. At this point I think Justin McCarthy's opinion may be appropriately given: "During the earlier days of my work in London journalism I had the great good fortune to make the personal acquaintance of Charles Dickens. I was only a beginner in literature at the time, and was an absolutely obscure young man; but I was fortunate enough to obtain an introduction to Dickens, and I found him always friendly, genial and kind. I can well recall even at the present moment the thrill of

gratification which I used to feel in those far-off days, when on casually meeting Charles Dickens I found that he recognised me and even remembered my name. I was ever unfailing in my attendance at Dickens's readings in London, and became filled with the conviction which impressed itself on most of those who heard them, that if he had chosen to make the stage his career, he would have ranked amongst the greatest English actors. The world has good reason to rejoice that he kept to his own work and has left us in his books a living reality, whereas even had he been the greatest of actors, he could have bequeathed to us nothing but tradition."

The brilliant author of "The History of Our Times" wrote the above in 1905.

Although the actor's life had a supreme fascination for Dickens, there were so many urgent literary calls upon his time that it was quite six years from the date of the Liverpool scenes of "Used Up" and "Mr. Nightingale's Diary," in September, 1852, before he appeared in public again. But every year, and sometimes more than once in the year, he devised home performances for the entertainment of his children. "Carrying my memory back to his home in the first half of 1854," says John Forster, "there are few things that arise more pleasantly in connection with it than the children's theatricals.

These began with the first Twelfth Night at Tavistock House, and were renewed until the principal actors ceased to be children. The best of the performances were 'Tom Thumb' and 'Fortunio,' in '54 and '55; Dickens now joining first in the revel, and Mark Lemon bringing into it his own clever children, and a very mountain of child-pleasing fun in himself. In Fielding's burlesque he was the giantess Glumdalca, and Dickens was the Ghost of Gaffer Thumb; the names by which they respectively appeared being the Infant Phenomenon and the Modern Garrick." I may pause here to remind readers of to-day that thirty and forty years ago Twelfth Night (Old Christmas Day) was kept up in all upper middle and middle-class families as quite a festival, when cakes and ale abounded and good cheer was the object and aim of all. Children's parties were held and joy reigned everywhere, as it marked the end of the Christmas festivities and all the youngsters returned to school. The custom has fallen into desuetude, and the only reminder, apparently we have of the event is the annual cutting of the Baddeley Cake on the stage of Drury Lane Theatre, with a ball to follow. To resume. "In 'Fortunio' Twelfth Night 1855," continues Forster, "Dickens played the testy Old Baron, and took advantage of the excitement against the Czar, then raging,

to denounce him (in a song) as no other than own cousin to the very Bear that Fortunio had gone forth to subdue. He depicted him in his desolation of autocracy as the Robinson Crusoe of absolute state, who had at his Court many a show-day and many a high-day, but hadn't in all his dominions a Friday. The bill, which attributed these interpolations to the 'Dramatic Poet of the Establishment,' deserves also mention for the fun of the six-lettered announcements which stood at the head of it, and could not have been bettered by Crummles himself. 'Re-engagement of that irresistible comedian, Mr. Ainger,' 'Re-appearance of Mr. H., who created so powerful an impression last year,' 'Return of Mr. Charles Dickens, Jun., from his German Engagements,' 'Engagement of Miss Kate, who declined the munificent offers of the management last season.' 'Mr. Passé, Mr. Mudperiod, Mr. Measely Servile, and Mr. Wilkini Collini.' 'First appearance of Mr. Plornishmaroontigoonter (who has been kept out of bed at a vast expense).' The last performer mentioned was yet some distance from the third year of his age. Dickens was Mr. Passé." All the great men in literature and art were invited to these entertainments. On one occasion Thackeray, who was present, was so tickled by the singing by Dickens of that ridiculous ditty "Villikins

and His Dinah," that he positively rolled off his seat in the ecstasy of his laughter.

Here, by the way, is a characteristic letter from Charles Dickens to James Robinson Planché.

"Tavistock House,
"Sunday, Seventh January, 1855.

"DEAR PLANCHÉ,

"My children have a little story-book play under paternal direction once a year on a birthday occasion. They are going to do 'Fortunio' to-morrow night, with which I have taken some liberties for their purpose. If you should happen to be disengaged, we should be delighted to see you, and you would meet some old stagers whom you know very well. We all know you to be on such familiar terms with the fairies that the smallest actor in the company is not afraid of you.

"I am obliged to appoint a quarter past 8 (I mean that for an eight) as the latest hour of arrival, because the theatre is almost as inconveniently constructed as an English real one, and nobody can by any human means be got into it after the play is begun.

"Very faithfully yours,
"CHARLES DICKENS."

"J. R. Planché, Esq."

Planché went, met his friend Thackeray and others, and "enjoyed the evening exceedingly. The little actors did credit to the 'paternal direction,' and Dickens's histrionic ability is almost as generally well-known as his admirable contributions to English literature. He was as fond of fairy lore as I was, and it was a great bond of union between us." At a dinner later the two met again at the house of a mutual friend, and Planché mentioned that he was about to publish a complete collection of the Countess d'Aulnoy's stories, which Dickens was delighted to hear. Planché sent him a copy of the work, which promptly received an appreciative notice in *Household Words*.

But serious dramatic work also arrested Dickens's attention at Tavistock House and elsewhere, including two very powerful plays written by Wilkie Collins, namely "The Lighthouse" and the "Frozen Deep," both of which pieces were afterwards staged on the regular boards. "The Lighthouse" was first exhibited on June 19th, 1855, at Tavistock House, with the author, Wilkie Collins, Charles Dickens, Mark Lemon, Augustus Egg, Miss Hogarth, and Miss Mary Dickens (the novelist's eldest daughter in the cast), together with the favourite "Mr. Nightingale's Diary," in which Dickens repeated his original impersonation, assisted by

SCENE FROM "THE LIGHTHOUSE," AT CAMPDEN HOUSE, 1855. CHARLES DICKENS AS GURNOCK.

[*To face p.* 38.

Mr. Frank Stone and Miss Kate Dickens—the youngest daughter. "The success was wonderful; and in the three delighted audiences who crowded to what the bills described as the smallest theatre in the world, were not a few notabilities of London. Carlyle compared Dickens's wild picturesqueness in the old lighthouse-keeper to the famous picture in Nicholas Poussin's bacchanalian dance in the National Gallery." Mrs. Cowden-Clarke, speaking of Dickens's representation of the lighthouse-keeper, Aaron Garnock, exclaimed: "A wonderful impersonation was this; very imaginative, very original, very wild, very striking; his grandly intelligent eyes were made to assume a wandering look—a sad, scared, lost gaze, as of one whose spirit was away from present objects, and wholly occupied with absent and long-past images." In July of the same year the performance was repeated at Campden House, Kensington, for the benefit of the Bournemouth Sanatorium for Consumptive Patients, and was most enthusiastically received. In his "Journal of a London Playgoer," under date July 14th, 1855, we find the following from Professor Henry Morley: "Before a crowded audience, chiefly composed of ladies, was performed a new two-act play by Mr. Wilkie Collins, and a two-act farce. The play was called 'The Lighthouse,' and

told a tale of Eddystone in the old times. An exquisite picture (for such it is, and not a mere ordinary scene) of Eddystone as it stood in those days, from the pencil of Mr. Stanfield, was the drop-scene, and the actors were exhibited throughout as shut up in a little room within the lighthouse, also of Mr. Stanfield's painting, which, from its nature, could be set up in a private drawing-room or on a miniature stage. Similar exigences appear also to have been consulted in the manner of developing the plot of the play; the crime, the wreck, and all events upon which hangs the passion of the story, not being produced upon the scene, but breaking out from the narration of the actors. None of the leading incidents are shown actually, but their workings on the minds of the three lighthouse-men, who are the chief performers, and of the few other persons introduced into the story, contribute interest enough to sustain an earnest attention throughout. The little piece told upon the audience admirably. But it had rare advantages. It was, in its principal parts, acted by distinguished writers, with whose artistic skill upon the stage the public has been for some time familiar. The three lighthouse-men are at first shown cut off by a month's storm from the mainland. They are an old man and his son, together with the father of the young man's

sweetheart. The old man's memory is haunted by what he believes to have been his passive consent to a most foul murder. Weakened by starvation, his brain becomes wholly possessed by dread of his crime. The spectre of the supposed murdered lady seems to stand at his bedside and bid him speak. He does speak, and, possessed with a wild horror at all he recollects, reveals to his son his shame. Upon the acting of this character depends the whole force of the story, as presented to the audience, and it is in the hands of a master. He is a rough man, whose face has been familiar for years with wind and spray, haggard and wild just now, and something light-headed, oppressed not more by conscience than by hunger. He tells his tale, and his son turns from him, shrinks from his touch, struck down by the horror of the crime, and the humiliation to himself involved in it. Relief comes to the party soon after this; they are fed, and the physical depression is removed. Eager then to gain his son's esteem and cancel the disclosure of his secret, the old lighthouse-man changes in manner. By innumerable master-touches on the part of the actor, we are shown what his rugged ways have been of hiding up the knowledge that stirs actively within his conscience; but his effort to be bold produces only nervous bluster, and his frantic desire to

recover his son's respect, though he may take him by the throat to extort it from him, is still mixed up with a horrible sense of blood-guiltiness, wonderfully expressed by little instinctive actions. I will not follow the story to its last impressive moment of the rough, nervous seaman's prayer, in which the old man stands erect, with his hands joined over his head, overpowered by the sudden removal of the load that has so long weighed upon his heart. But to the last that piece of the truest acting was watched with minute attention by the company assembled; and rarely has acting on the regular stage better rewarded scrutiny."

It seems extraordinary that Professor Henry Morley, being so deeply impressed with the acting, should carefully abstain from stating that the actor who enthralled him was Charles Dickens, then the most famous figure in the literary firmament of the hour. Apropos of "The Lighthouse," Walter Herries Pollock favoured F. G. Kitton with the following reminiscence: "My mother, Juliet, Lady Pollock, wife of the second baronet, congratulating Dickens most enthusiastically after the performance, presently said, 'There is one actor, and only one, I have ever seen of whom you sometimes remind me—that is, Frédérick Lemaître.' Dickens replied, with a twinkle in his

eyes, 'Odd, you should say that. He is the only actor I have ever tried to take as a model.'" Mrs. Yates, a very distinguished actress, also compared Dickens to Lemaître in his best days. What with consummate acting and beautiful scenery, the little piece was unanimously pronounced to be a complete triumph. Charles Dickens wrote not only the rather long "Song of the Wreck," but also the Prologue to "The Lighthouse." The song was sung by his daughter Mary in the character of Phœbe. It was set to the music which George Linley composed for Miss Charlotte Young's pretty ballad "Little Nell," of which Dickens became particularly fond.

THE PROLOGUE.

(*Slow music all the time; unseen speaker; curtain down.*)

"A story of those rocks where doom'd ships come
To cast them wreck'd upon the steps of home,
Where solitary men, the long year through—
The wind their music and the brine their view—
Warn mariners to shun the beacon light;
A story of those rocks is here to-night.
Eddystone Lighthouse!

(*Exterior view discovered.*)

"In its ancient form
Ere he who built it wish'd for the great storm
That shiver'd it to nothing, once again
Behold out-gleaming on the angry main!
Within it are three men; to these repair
In our frail book of Fancy, swift as air!
They are but shadows, as the rover grim
Took none but shadows in his boat with him.

"So be *ye* shades, and, for a little space,
The real world a dream without a trace.
Return is easy. It will bear ye back
Too soon to the old beaten dusty track;
For but one hour forget it. Billows, rise;
Blow winds, fall rain, be black ye midnight skies:
And you who watch the light arise, arise!"

Subsequently "The Lighthouse" was produced at the Olympic Theatre, August 11th, 1857, with the "Great Little Robson" in Dickens's part of Aaron Garnock, supported by Messrs. Addison, Walter Gordon, G. Cooke, Miss Wyndham, and Miss Swanborough. Mr. Vining spoke the original prologue in front of the act drop, which was an exact reproduction of Clarkson Stanfield's Tavistock House picture representing "The Lighthouse." This beautiful picture, by the way, which only took Clarkson Stanfield a couple of days to execute, was sold at the Dickens Gadshill sale for one thousand guineas. To the Olympic the play drew all London, and the management revived it on several occasions. Garnock was one of Robson's most impressive impersonations, though many adherents declare that Dickens's creation ran his performance very close.

CHAPTER IV

"THE FROZEN DEEP"

DICKENS'S final appearances as an actor were as Richard Wardour, in his friend Wilkie Collins's drama "The Frozen Deep." This also was first presented at Tavistock House—now long since demolished—on January 6th (Twelfth Night), 1857, and was several times repeated, in public, with certain necessary alterations in the cast, in London and the provinces in aid of the Douglas Jerrold Fund (Douglas Jerrold was one of the first editors of *Lloyd's Newspaper*, by the way), one of the representations taking place at the defunct Gallery of Illustration, Waterloo Place, Regent Street, in the presence of Queen Victoria and members of the Royal Family. The Gallery of Illustration, where the German Reeds started their entertainment, afterwards migrating to St. George's Hall, Langham Place, where they gave their charming performances for many years. Canon Ainger, in *Macmillan's Magazine* for January, 1871, said, "The character of Wardour (Dickens) afforded

the actor opportunity for a fine display of mental struggle and a gradual transition from moodiness to vindictiveness, and finally, under the pressure of suffering, to penitence." An eminent critic considered that Dickens's rendering of Wardour might be the beginning of a new era for the stage, so great and well-sustained was its excellence. "Mr. Dickens shows that he is not only a great novelist, but a great actor also. Both, indeed, proceed from the same intense sympathy with humanity, the same subtle identification of the individual man with the breadth and depth of our general nature. Mr. Dickens has all the technical knowledge and resources of a professional actor; but these, the dry bones of acting, are kindled by that sort of vitality which can only be put into them by the man of genius." Carlyle often remarked upon Dickens's great histrionic gifts, and so did many other men equally competent to judge.

Perhaps the best and most authoritative person to speak on the subject was the author, Wilkie Collins, who, in some most powerful lines that prefaced the play when converted into narrative form, wrote, in 1874, as under :—

"As long ago as the year 1856, I wrote a play called 'The Frozen Deep.' The work was first presented by amateur actors at the house of the late

SCENE FROM "THE FROZEN DEEP," AT TAVISTOCK HOUSE, 1857. CHARLES DICKENS AS RICHARD WARDOUR.

[*To face p.* 46.

Charles Dickens, on the 6th of January, 1857. Mr. Dickens himself played the principal part, and played it with a truth, vigour, and pathos never to be forgotten by those who were fortunate enough to witness the performance. The other personages were represented by the ladies of Mr. Dickens's family, by the late Mark Lemon, by the late Augustus Egg, R.A., and by the author. The next performance of 'The Frozen Deep' (played by the Amateur Company) took place at the Gallery of Illustration, Regent Street, before the Queen and the Royal Family, by the Queen's own command. After this special performance other representations of the work were given—first at the Gallery of Illustration, subsequently, with professional actresses, in some of the principal towns in England—for the benefit of a well-loved friend of ours, who died in 1857, the late Douglas Jerrold. At Manchester the play was twice performed—on the second evening in the presence of three thousand spectators. This was, I think, the finest of all the representations of 'The Frozen Deep.' The extraordinary intelligence and enthusiasm of the great audience stimulated us to do our best. Dickens surpassed himself. The trite phrase is the true phrase to describe that magnificence of acting. He electrified the audience." As the cast contains so many names of important people,

I give a copy of the programme of the memorable performance at the Manchester Free Trade Hall.

On Friday evening, August 21, and Saturday evening, August 22, 1857, at eight o'clock exactly, will be presented an entirely New Romantic Drama in three Acts, by

WILKIE COLLINS
called
THE FROZEN DEEP.

The Overture composed expressly for this piece by Mr. Francesco Berger, who will conduct the Orchestra.

CAPTAIN EDSWORTH (*of the* Sea Mew)	Mr. Edward Pigott.
CAPTAIN HELDING (*of the* Wanderer)	Mr. Alfred Dickens.
LIEUTENANT CRAYFORD ..	Mr. Mark Lemon.
FRANK ALDERSLEY	Mr. Wilkie Collins.
RICHARD WARDOUR	Mr. Charles Dickens.
LIEUTENANT STEVENTON ..	Mr. Young Charles.
JOHN WANT (*ship's cook*) ..	Mr. Augustus Egg.
BATESON } (*two of the* Sea Mew's	Mr. Shirley Brooks.
DARKER } *people.*)	Mr. Charles Collins.
OFFICERS AND CREW OF THE *Sea Mew* AND *Wanderer.*	
MRS. STEVENTON	Mrs. George Vining.
ROSE EBSWORTH	Miss Ellen Sabine.
LUCY CRAYFORD	Miss Ellen Ternan.
CLARA BURNHAM	Miss Maria Ternan.
NURSE ESTHER	Mrs. Ternan.
MAID	Miss Mewte.

"Mr. Young Charles" was a nickname invented by Dickens for his eldest son, while "Miss Mewte" stood for a young lady who had nothing to say.

"Considering," says the late T. E. Pemberton,

" that the greater part of its action takes place in the Arctic regions, the mounting of Mr. Wilkie Collins's play was no slight undertaking for the amateur stage, but this is as nothing compared with the successful interpretation of the character of Richard Wardour by one who called himself an amateur actor. The dramatist has depicted Wardour as a man swayed by the most intense passions, placed by circumstances in positions of the most terrible trial. It is just one of those parts that bad or even indifferent acting of a melodramatic school would make ridiculous. But in the hands of Dickens it became a magnificent human study, and lifted the play, and all concerned in it, into a splendid artistic success."

There seems to be no doubt that, although Dickens could not be called a perfect or accomplished actor, yet with perseverence and more experience he would have left, as a professional actor, an indelible impression on the history of the stage.

Mrs. Henry Compton, the mother of Edward Compton and Miss Compton (Mrs. R. C. Carton), bore invaluable testimony to the depth of theatrical talent and art displayed by Dickens. " Mrs. Compton," says Mr. Pemberton, " who, as Miss Emmeline Montague, was recognised as one of the most accomplished and delightful actresses of those

days, and who consequently speaks with no ordinary authority, says that though she was on these occasions (when she was acting with the 'Splendid Strollers') appearing with 'amateurs,' she always felt that in playing with Dickens she had by her side an *actor* whose tact, talent, and resource, would be equal to any emergency that might arise. She also tells how her gifted husband (Henry Compton, of the Haymarket, and the Lyceum under Sir Henry Irving) used to declare that had Dickens adopted the stage as a profession, he would have made upon it fame and fortune."

"The Frozen Deep" was placed in the evening bills at the Olympic Theatre, October 27th, 1866, and had a considerable success. Henry Neville (who passed away June 19th, 1910) played Richard Wardour; H. J. Montague, Frank Aldersley; Horace Wigan, Lieutenant Crayford; Dominick Murray, John Want; and Lydia Foote—what a fine actress she was!—was the Clara Vernon.

Both "The Frozen Deep" and "The Lighthouse" were published—I mean in play-form pamphlets before production, by the way—and they are to be found in "The Miscellaneous Papers," edited by B. W. Matz.

There is no doubt, notwithstanding his capabilities as a player, that it was as a reader of his own

works that Dickens pre-eminently shone, as I have already indicated. One last word as to his acting. I give an extract as to his theatrical talents, penned about 1870. "Analogous to his powers as a reader were his abilities as an actor; and it has been said of him with truth that, with perhaps the exception of Frédèrick Lemaître in his best days, there was no one who could excel Charles Dickens in purely dramatic representation. Those who saw the character of the lighthouse-keeper in Mr. Wilkie Collins's drama as portrayed first by Mr. Dickens and then by Mr. Robson, were enabled to judge of the wonderful superiority of the rendering given by the former. And not merely as an actor, but as a stage-director, were his talents pre-eminent; not only did he play his own part to perfection, but he taught every one else in his company how to play theirs; he would devise scenery with Stanfield and Telbin, take a practical share in the stage carpentry, write out the copy of the playbill, and in every way thoroughly earn the title of 'Mr. Crummles' with which he was always affectionately greeted on these occasions."

To "The Frozen Deep" Dickens contributed a rhymed prologue, which at Tavistock House was recited by John Forster, while at the first public performance it was delivered by Dickens himself.

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The late F. G. Kitton says: "It is not generally known that a by no means inconsiderable portion of the drama was composed by Dickens, as testified by the original manuscripts of the play and the prompt-book, which contain numerous additions and corrections in his handwriting." These writings, by the way, realised £300 at Sotheby's in 1900. Hereunder is "The Prologue" to "The Frozen Deep."

"One savage footprint on the lonely shore
Where one man listen'd to the surge's roar,
Not all the winds that stir the mighty sea
Can ever ruffle in the memory.
If such its interest, and thrall, O then
Pause on the footprints of heroic men.
Making a garden of the desert wide
Where Parry conquered death, and Franklin died.

"To that white region where the Lost lie low,
Wrapt in their mantles of eternal snow,—
Unvisited by change, nothing to mock,
Those statues sculptured in the icy rock,
We pray your company; that hearts as true
(Though nothings of the air) may live for you;
Nor only yet that on our little glass
A faint reflection of those wilds may pass,
But the secrets of the vast Profound
Within us, an exploring hand may sound,
Testing the region of the ice-bound soul,
Seeking the passage at its northern pole,
Softening the horrors of its wintry sleep,
Melting the surface of that 'Frozen Deep.'

Before ringing up. See Properties ready according to List & See that John Want has pipe and fire-box.

Act III

Scene A cavern on the Coast of Newfoundland, opening at the (left hand) side on another Cavern. In flat, opening on a bright view of Sea-Beach and Sea, with a ship at anchor in the offing. ~~Discovered~~ John Want discovered, cording a box. ~~On the other side Nurse Esther, sitting on a fragment of rock, with her face hidden in her handk~~

John Want

~~Striking match at North.~~ There's a nice kind of fellow wanted for a cheerful man like me to keep company with! That woman's one great heap of grumble, (big trouble) from head to foot. If I had only known before I was rescued that I was to marry (to have to marry) such a piece, I think I should have preferred staying at the North Pole. I was very happy, keeping up everybody's spirits at the North Pole. I had a good deal of sleep at the North Pole. Taking one thing with another, I think I must have been very comfortable at the North Pole, if I had only known it. Another man in my place might be inclined to say that this Newfoundland cavern was rather a sloppy, stony, draughty, ~~[illegible]~~ sea-weedy sort of a habitation to stop in. Another man might object to perpetual Newfoundland fogs, perpetual Newfoundland Cod Fish, and perpetual Newfoundland dogs. We had some very nice Bears at the North Pole. But never mind, it's all one to me, I don't grumble.

Looking up suddenly	Nurse Man man, ye do nought else	
	John Want Nothing else but grumble? Is this unjoyful woman joking? I grumble! Who ever heard a word of complaint issue from my lips? Whoam saw a sour look on my face?	
	Nurse Face! Dye ca' yon skelit thing o' th' top o' your shoulders, a face, fasicle but	

FACSIMILE OF A PAGE FROM THE PROMPT BOOK OF "THE FROZEN DEEP."

[To face p. 52.

Vanish ye mists! Not yet do we repair
To the still country of the piercing air,
But seek, before we cross the troubled seas
An English hearth, and Devon's waving trees."

Mr. Marcus Stone, R.A., who presided at the Boz Club Dinner, held at the Hotel Metropole on February 7th, 1910, in proposing the toast of "The Immortal Memory of Charles Dickens," said, in the course of a most excellent speech: "There were children's theatricals, and there was the finer one of 'The Frozen Deep.' We also played in a piece called 'The Lighthouse.' In 'The Lighthouse' I played a very small part in the entertainment; I played the wind. In 'The Frozen Deep' I played the part of a British officer who had one word to say—'Stay,' was all my part. We played in Manchester, we played in London, we played before the Queen, who came with her daughter, then engaged to be married to the Prince, who afterwards became the Emperor Frederick. On a Saturday night this performance took place. We played 'The Frozen Deep,' which was to be followed by a farce. By the time the first piece was done it was twelve o'clock, and it was felt necessary to send round to know what the Queen's pleasure was under the circumstances. Her Majesty said that the play should go on; and I think that showed a very fine, broad spirit."

Before coming to Dickens's own dramas, let me wind up this chapter in a fitting manner. In the early summer of 1870 the author of "David Copperfield" and his constant friend, Charles Kent, took their last suburban walk together, and just as they were approaching the shadow of the venerable and historic Abbey of Westminster, where the great writer was soon to be laid to rest, Dickens abruptly asked his companion, "What do you think would be the realisation of one of my most cherished day-dreams?" adding instantly, without waiting for a reply, "To settle down now for the remainder of my life within easy distance of a great theatre, in the direction of which I should hold supreme authority. It should be a house, of course, having a skilled and noble company, and one in every way magnificently appointed. The pieces acted should be dealt with according to my pleasure, and touched up here and there according to my own judgment; the players as well as the plays being absolutely under my command. There," he said laughingly, and in a glow at the merry fancy, "*that's* my day-dream."

Alas! in a few short weeks all his dreams were buried in his last, long sleep.

CHAPTER V

DICKENS AS A DRAMATIST

WHAT first attracted Dickens to the stage? How did he come to write his first plays? We get no direct indication in his biographies, written by different friends and authors, but a letter from his first employer is interesting on the subject.

"I was well acquainted," wrote Mr. Edward Blackmore, of Arlesford, in the early seventies, "with his (Dickens's) parents, and, being then in practice in Gray's Inn, they asked me if I could find employment for him. He was a bright and clever-looking youth, and I took him as a clerk. He came to me in May, 1827, and left in November, 1828; and I have now an account-book which he used to keep of petty disbursements in the office, in which he charged himself with the modest salary, first of thirteen shillings and sixpence, and afterwards of fifteen shillings a week. Several incidents took place in

the office, of which he must have been a keen observer, as I recognised some of them in his 'Pickwick' and 'Nickleby'; and I am much mistaken if some of his characters had not their originals in persons I well remember. His taste for theatricals was much promoted by a fellow-clerk named Potter, since dead, with whom he chiefly associated. They took every opportunity, then unknown to me, of going together to a minor theatre; where (I afterwards heard) they not infrequently engaged in parts."

This evidently was the real beginning of the thraldom of the stage—the thraldom that only ended with his demise. There is no doubt that it was through his eldest sister Fanny's musical attainments and friendships that Dickens became acquainted with John Braham, the famous tenor, who composed and sang the great song the "Death of Nelson," who built the St. James's Theatre, and opened it December 14th, 1835, at a cost of £26,000. Through her, doubtless, he got to know John Hullah, and with him wrote his first genuine play, described on the bills as "A Comic Burletta," called "The Strange Gentleman," announced as by "Boz," which was produced at the St. James's Theatre, September 29th, 1836. I give the full cast.

THE STRANGE GENTLEMAN.

First Performed at the St. James's Theatre, on Thursday, September 29, 1836.

MR. OWEN OVERTON (*Mayor of a small town on the road to Gretna, and useful at the St. James's Arms*)	Mr. Hollingsworth.
JOHN JOHNSON (*detained at the St. James's Arms*)	Mr. Sidney.
THE STRANGE GENTLEMAN (*just arrived at the St. James's Arms*)	Mr. Harley.
CHARLES TOMKINS (*Incognito at the St. James's Arms*)	Mr. Forester.
TOM SPARKS (*a one-eyed "Boots," at the St. James's Arms*)	Mr. Gardner.
JOHN, TOM, WILL (*waiters at the St. James's Arms*)	Mr. Williamson. Mr. May. Mr. Coulson.
JULIA DOBBS (*looking for a husband at the St. James's Arms*) ..	Madame Sala.
FANNY WILSON (*with an appointment at the St. James's Arms*)	Miss Smith.
MARY WILSON (*her sister, awkwardly situated at the St. James's Arms*)	Miss Julia Smith.
MRS. NOAKES (*the landlady at the St. James's Arms*)	Mrs. W. Penson.
CHAMBERMAID (*at the St. James's Arms*)	Miss Stuart.

Miss Smith and Miss Julia Smith will sing the duet of "I know a Bank" in "The Strange Gentleman."

SCENE.—A small town on the road to Gretna.

TIME.—Part of a day and night.

Madame Sala, who played Julia Dobbs, was the mother of George Augustus Sala, the famous journalist, author, and raconteur, and one of Dickens's "young men" on *Household Words*, and, later, *All the Year Round*. After a time Mr. J. Webster took the part of Charles Tomkins.

"The Strange Gentleman" was revived at the Charing Cross Theatre (afterwards the Folly and then Toole's) in the winter of 1873, by Mr. W. H. C. Nation, who tells me that, after its reproduction, some members of the family of Charles Dickens intimated to him that the late author would not have liked it being played, so he withdrew it.

Of Dickens's connection with St. James's Theatre, John Forster, in his "Life," scarcely says a word of any moment; but Theodore Taylor, in 1870, is more explicit. He says: "During the publication of 'The Pickwick Papers,' St. James's Theatre was opened September 29th, 1836, with a burletta entitled 'The Strange Gentleman,' written by 'Boz'; Pritt Harley acted the Strange Gentleman, and 'Boz' himself, on one occasion, took a part. The piece ran until December, when it was withdrawn for an operatic burletta, 'The Village Coquettes,' by the same author, the music by John Hullah. The parts were sustained by Messrs. Harley (as Martin Stokes), Braham (as Squire Norton), Bennett (as George

SCENE FROM "THE STRANGE GENTLEMAN," AT THE ST. JAMES'S THEATRE, 1836.

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Edmunds), Strickland, and John Parry ; Mesdames Smith, Rainsforth (as Lucy Benson), and others. It met with a marked reception, and Braham for a long time after, at different concerts, sang 'The Child and the Old Man sat alone,' invariably getting encored most enthusiastically. Three other songs in the burletta were great favourites, viz., 'Love is not a Feeling to pass away,' 'Autumn Leaves,' and 'There's a Charm in Spring.' "

This writer is not correct in saying that "The Strange Gentleman" gave place to "Village Coquettes," because, as a matter of fact, the former piece was included in the bill of December 6th, so that Charles Dickens's two pieces made up the entire programme. The next night, however, "The Strange Gentleman" was withdrawn in favour of the humorous burletta of "Tom Thumb," concluding with "Delicate Intentions."

Here is a copy of the book-bill—

THE VILLAGE COQUETTES.

An Operatic Burletta, in Two Acts.

By Charles Dickens.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

First Produced at the St. James's Theatre, December 6, 1836.

Squire Norton	Mr. Braham.
The Hon. Sparkins Flam (*his friend*)	Mr. Morris Barnett.
Old Benson (*a small farmer*)	Mr. Strickland.

Mr. Martin Stokes (*a very small farmer with a very large circle of particular friends*)	Mr. Harley.
George Edmunds (*betrothed to Lucy*) ..	Mr. Bennett.
Young Benson	Mr. J. Parry.
John Maddox (*attached to Rose*)	Mr. Gardner.
Lucy Benson	Miss Rainforth.
Rose (*her cousin*)	Miss J. Smith.

Period.—The Autumn of 1729.

Scene.—An English Village.

Time Occupied in Representation.—Two hours and a half.

The Music by John Hullah.

Costume.—The Respective Characters are dressed in the provincial costume of the country at the commencement of the last century.

After a few nights Mr. Barnett was replaced; owing to the slating he got in "Figaro in London" for this performance, by Mr. Forester.

The book of the words of "The Village Coquettes," which sold in 1837 for 10*d.*, is now worth three or four guineas. It was published by Bentley's, and dedicated to J. Pritt Harley in the following terms :—

"My dramatic bantlings are no sooner born than you father them. You have made my 'Strange Gentleman' exclusively your own; you have adopted 'Martin Stokes' with equal readiness :—

"'Either the Honourable gentleman is in the right, or he is not,' is a phrase in very common use within the walls of Parliament. This drama may have a plot, or it may not; and the songs may be

poetry, or they may not ; and the whole affair, from beginning to end, may be great nonsense, or it may not ; just as the honourable gentleman or lady who reads it may happen to think. So, retaining his own private and particular opinion upon the subject (an opinion which he formed upwards of a year ago, when he wrote the piece), the author leaves every gentleman or lady to form his or hers, as he or she may think proper, without saying one word to influence or conciliate them.

" All he wishes to say is this—that he hopes Mr. Braham, and all the performers who assisted in the representation of this opera, will accept his warmest thanks for the interest they evinced in it from its very first rehearsal, and for their zealous efforts in his behalf—efforts which have crowned it with a degree of success far exceeding his most sanguine anticipations ; and of which no form of words could speak his acknowledgment.

" It is needless to add, that the libretto of an opera must be to a certain extent, a mere vehicle for the music ; and that it is scarcely fair or reasonable to judge it by those strict rules of criticism which would be justly applicable to a five-act tragedy or a finished comedy."

It should be noted that " The Strange Gentleman " was an adaptation from Dickens's own story

"The Great Winglebury Duel," which will be found in "Sketches by Boz"—a whimsical production in which the humour arose from mistakes made at an inn on the North Road. The next dramatic venture by Dickens took the form of "an original comic burletta in one act, written by Boz, called 'Is She His Wife? or, Something Singular.'"

Alfred Lovetown, Esq.	Mr. Forester.
Mr. Peter Limbury	Mr. Gardner.
Felix Tapkins	Mr. Harley.
Mrs. Lovetown	Miss Allison.
Mrs. Peter Limbury	Madame Sala.

Other pieces were also given—a two-act operatic burletta by Mrs. S. C. Hall, entitled "The French Refuge" and "The Lottery Ticket," by Samuel Beazely, a farce that is still to be seen in the country, and amongst the amateurs. This took place at the St. James's Theatre, of course, March 6th, 1837. From an old playbill I quote particulars of a song that I fancy few ever heard of. It was sung on the occasion of Harley's benefit, March 13th, 1837: "Mr. Harley will, in the character of Mr. Pickwick, make his first visit to the St. James's Theatre and relate to a Scotch air his experiences of a 'white bait dinner at Blackwall,' edited expressly for him by his biographer, 'Boz.'" I believe the Scotch air was "There's nae luck about the house." But how interesting!

On this benefit "Figaro in London," March 18th, 1837, says: "In Boz's admirable farce of 'Is She His Wife?' Harley delighted his numerous friends by his very humorous performance of the principal character; and in a song, also by Boz, he displayed to great advantage his well-known talent for the English buffo parlante. The performances concluded with 'The Strange Gentleman' who having made, we believe, nearly seventy visits to the St. James's Theatre, can scarcely be called a stranger."

In the days that these plays were presented to the public the theatre doors were opened as early as half-past six and the curtain rose punctually at seven o'clock. The prices of admission then ranged from five shillings for the stalls to eighteenpence and a shilling, with reduced second prices at about nine o'clock, and frequently the last piece would not be over until one or half-past in the morning. When "half price" was done away with (only for a time, however) the charge to the gallery was sixpence.

Speaking of the production of "The Strange Gentleman," the *Carlton Chronicle* of October 1st, 1836, says: "The entertainment commenced with a burletta from the pen of a gentleman who has very much amused the town by the broad humour and downright fun of some sketches published by him

under the sobriquet 'Boz.' 'The Strange Gentleman' is, we believe, founded upon one of his own stories, and it abounds in those strokes of quaintness and happy perception and rich description of the ludicrous, for which his writings are remarkable. . . . A great number of mistakes occur; there is a great perplexity, and a number of accidents, which chiefly tend to the inconvenience and annoyance of the strange gentleman, who was personated by Mr. Harley, and who was accordingly, as to the physique and the performance, precisely what Mr. Harley is, in whatever character he may appear. . . . The piece was very well received throughout." The criticism of "The Village Coquettes" was quite laudatory, but the critic added, and it sounds curious in these days, when we expect wit in our dialogue and humour in our songs—"For a simple village tale of this kind, written either as an accessory to the music, or as a vehicle for the melodies, a sparkling dialogue would be inappropriate!"

The manuscript of "The Lamplighter" is in the Forster Library at South Kensington; it was written in 1838 at Macready's desire for performance at Covent Garden Theatre, but never acted. Dickens read it to Bartley, the same stage-manager to whom he had applied years before when he sought to become an actor, and had an impression that Bartley seemed

to recognise in him the ambitious Thespian, and, at the same time, the now popular novelist. The actors could not agree either about the play or, their parts, and in truth "The Lamplighter"—a copy of which lies before me as I write—is not a brilliant affair, and in any case it is badly constructed and in too many scenes. Three years afterwards Dickens converted it into a humorous narrative under the title of "The Lamplighter's Story," which appeared in book form, with other tales, called "The Pic Nic Papers," for the benefit of Mrs. Macrone, the widow of his first publisher, when the sales realised three hundred pounds clear. Theodore Taylor (or H. T. Taverner) speaks of it thus: "It was about this time (1841) that the 'Pic Nic Papers' by 'various hands,' and edited by Dickens, was issued by Henry Colburn in three volumes, with illustrations by George Cruikshank. The work was the result of a series of literary contributions in aid of the family of Mr. Macrone, who had just died. He was described in the preface as 'A publisher who died prematurely young, and in the prime and vigour of his years, before he had time or opportunity to make any provision for his wife and infant children, and at the moment when his prospects were brightest and the difficulties of his enterprise were nearly overcome.' The editor led off with 'The Lamplighter's Story.'

The contributors comprised Messrs. Talfourd, Thomas Moore, W. H. Maxwell, Leith Ritchie, Michael Honan, John Forster, Allan Cunningham, and W. Harrison Ainsworth. The book served the purpose it was intended for, and realised a large sum. It is now seldom read, and then more for the editor's tale than for anything else contained in it." The publisher was Macrone, who issued Dickens's very first volume—" Sketches by Boz."

The present writer possesses a reprint of the " Pic Nic Papers," and besides the list of contributors given above, the name of Miss Agnes Strickland may be added with honourable mention.

The following significant letter, written by Charles Dickens to R. H. Horne, November 13th, 1843, should, I think, be preserved. I quote it from " The Letters of Charles Dickens " by " His Sister-in-Law and His Eldest Daughter "; it throws quite a new light on the subject of the novelist's early contributions to the stage.

" . . . Pray tell that besotted —— to let the opera sink into its native obscurity. I did it in a fit of d——ble good nature long ago, for Hullah, who wrote some very pretty music to it. I just put down for everybody what everybody at the St. James's Theatre wanted to say and do best, and I have been most sincerely repentant ever since. The

farce I also did as a sort of practical joke, for Harley, whom I have known a long time. It was funny—adapted from one of the published sketches called 'The Great Winglebury Duel,' and was published by Chapman and Hall. But I have no copy of it now, nor should I think they have. But both these things were done without the least consideration or regard to reputation.

"I wouldn't repeat them for a thousand pounds apiece, and devoutly wish them to be forgotten. If you will impress this upon the waxy mind of —— I should be truly and unaffectedly obliged."

Of "Mr. Nightingale's Diary" written by Dickens in collaboration with Mark Lemon, I have already spoken at length.

Dickens's next and final play was happily christened "No Thoroughfare." It was a joint piece of work, written with Wilkie Collins, who, during Dickens's absence in the States, finished transforming it into a play for Charles Fechter, with a view to which it had been originally planned. Indeed, several years before it took proper shape, Dickens wrote, "Talking of comedies, I still see 'No Thoroughfare' staring me in the face every time I look down the road." This allusion to the comedy expresses a fancy he at this time had, remarks Mr. Forster, "of being able to contribute

some such achievement in aid of Macready's gallant efforts at Covent Garden to bring back to the stage its higher associations of literature and intellectual enjoyment. It connects curiously now that unrealised hope with the exact title of the only story he ever helped himself to dramatise, and which Mr. Fechter played at the Adelphi, three years before his death."

"No Thoroughfare" was produced at the New Adelphi Theatre, December 26th, 1867, of which E. L. Blanchard wrote, "To Adelphi to see 'No Thoroughfare,' with which much pleased."

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

VEILED LADY	Mrs. Billington.
SARAH GOLDSTRAW (*otherwise Sally*)	Mrs. Alfred Mellon.
LITTLE WALTER WILDING ..	Master Sidney.
FIRST HUSBAND	Mr. R. Romer.
SECOND HUSBAND	Mr. Pritchard.
FIRST WIFE	Mrs. Stoker.
SECOND WIFE	Mrs. D'Este.
MR. WALTER WILDING ..	Mr. Billington.
MR. BINTRY (*a man of law*) ..	Mr. G. Belmore.
JOEY LADLE	Mr. Benjamin Webster.
GEORGE VENDALE	Mr. H. G. Neville.
JULES OBENREIZER	Mr. Fechter.
MARGUERITE	Miss Carlotta Addison.
MADAME DOR	Mrs. A. Lewis.
JEAN MARIE (*a Guide*)	Mr. C. F. Smith.
JEAN PAUL (*ditto*)	Mr. Branscombe.
FATHER FRANCIS	Mr. R. Phillips.
MONKS	Mr. Aldridge. Mr. Tomlinson.

SCENE FROM "NO THOROUGHFARE," AT THE ADELPHI THEATRE, 1867.

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There is no need to print the description of the costumes, which were of the period of the production of the play—1867. In this remarkable production the two characters that stood out most prominently were those enacted by Charles Dickens's great friend, Charles Fechter, an extraordinary actor and an extraordinary man, and Benjamin Webster, whose Joey Ladle became the talk of the town.

Only two members of this memorable cast are now alive—Mrs. Billington and Miss Carlotta Addison The drama was in six acts and played four hours, so that it had to be considerably cut; but apparently it went very well and received good support. It ran for one hundred and fifty nights, and then was taken bodily with the original cast to the Royal Standard Theatre, Shoreditch.

In June, 1868, Dickens went to Paris to superintend the rehearsals of a French version of "No Thoroughfare," called "L'Abîme," at the Vaudeville Theatre. In France the play was also a big success. Previously, on January 6th, 1868, an unauthorised version of the piece was presented at the Park Theatre, Brooklyn, by Mrs. F. B. Conway and company. This was called "Identity; or, No Thoroughfare," and was dished up by a certain Louis Lequel, of whom I find no record. But he entered

his stolen work according to Act of Congress "in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York," so that Dickens, who desired to produce his own play in America, found himself beaten at all points, and so, to avoid making a bad impression, creating a prejudice before his readings began, he abandoned all his lawful rights and let the American pirates rob him left and right.

As a curiosity worth saving from oblivion, I present a copy of the bill. It was announced as "dramatised from the Christmas Story of Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins."

IDENTITY; *or,* NO THOROUGHFARE.

ORIGINAL CAST.

As performed at Mrs. F. B. Conway's Park Theatre, Brooklyn, January 6, 1868.

MARGUERITE, (*Obenreizer's niece*)	Mrs. F. B. Conway.
OBENREIZER (*a Swiss merchant*) ..	Mr. F. B. Conway.
GEO. VENDALE (*of the firm of Wilding & Co.*	Mr. Claude Hamilton.
WALTER WILDING (*his senior partner*)	Mr. H. Meeker.
MR. BINTREY (*a lawyer*)	Mr. F. Chippendale.
JOEY LADLE, (*Wilding & Co.'s cellarman*)	Mr. Belvil Ryan.
MAITRE VOIGT (*a notary*)	Mr. G. Wren.
JARVIS (*clerk to Wilding & Co.*) ..	Mr. Samuels.
FIRST CONVENT PORTER	Mr. A. Queen.
SECOND CONVENT PORTER ..	Mr. Edves.

First Guide	Mr. Webster.
Second Guide	Mr. Shannon.
Landlord of the Swiss Inn ..	Mr. S. Parker.
Mrs. Goldstraw	Mrs. H. Howard.
Madame Dor (*Obenreizer's housekeeper*)	Mrs. Whitman.

Act I.—Wilding & Co.—The Senior Partner's Story.
Act II.—Vendale makes Love and causes mischief.
Act III.—The "Tourmente" on the Alps.

THRILLING "SENSATION SCENE."
THE MURDER IN THE GALLERY.
MARGUERITE'S LOVE.

Act IV.—Obenreizer makes a discovery.
HONOR AND LOVE TO MARGUERITE.

Period of the Play. 1861–1862.

The first two acts are laid in England—the last two in Switzerland.

This footnote particularly takes my fancy—

Permission to perform this Play can be obtained from the Author's Agent, Mr. C. T. Parsloe, 566 Broadway, to whom managers are requested to apply.

The right of performance, free of charge, is accorded to Amateurs.

When Dickens protested, to prevent a howl of horror from the whole country, he, as I have said, let the matter drop, so America was flooded with spurious versions of "No Thoroughfare."

On May 11th, 1903, there was presented at the Grand Theatre, Islington, "No Thoroughfare; or, the Story of a Foundling." On the programme

it stated further that it was "a stage version in a prologue and four acts by Oswald Brand of the "Christmas Story," by Charles Dickens and Wilkie Collins."

Mr. Bintry	Mr. F. H. Allen.
Walter Wilding	Mr. W. R. Sutherland.
Geo. Vendale	Mr. Leonard Yorke.
Joey Ladle	Mr. J. W. Bradbury.
Obenreizer	Mr. Oswald Brand.
Marguerite	Miss Naomi Neilson.
Madame Dor	Miss N. Clarence.
Mrs. Goldstein	Miss May Howard.
Veiled Lady	Miss Hardacre.
Matron of the Foundling Hospital	Miss Winifred Wood.
A Monk	Mr. Charles Gray.
Pompier	Mr. Will Holland.
Jarvis	Mr. A. Fenton.
Maitre Voigt	Mr. L. Derrick.

And several smaller parts. It was fairly well received.

Speaking of "Sketches by Boz," it may be noted that an undated, anonymous three-act play called "Poodles; or Clandestine Matches," founded on the "Boarding House" sketch, is in existence.

CHAPTER VI

DRAMAS FROM DICKENS'S WORKS: "THE PICKWICK PAPERS"

THE months in 1836–37 which saw the issue of the successive numbers of "The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club," were eventful ones indeed in the career of Charles Dickens. They saw the rise of his fame and fortunes, his marriage, the birth of his first child, and his first great grief; and they left the hitherto scarcely known young man already popular and famous. It was most decidedly the appearance of the inimitable Sam Weller in the fifth number that was the means of popularising "Pickwick" and the joyous author at the same happy moment. Dickens himself was fully conscious of the value of this character, for he wrote to Mrs. Dickens at the time to that effect.

Dutton Cook, writing in 1867, said: "Adaptation to the stage being generally the fate of the popular novel at some period of its career, it is not surprising that Mr. Dickens's works should almost invariably have undergone the process of conversion into plays,

although without the author's sanction, and indeed against his most earnest remonstrances. The readers of 'Nicholas Nickleby' may remember the warm attack upon adapters put into the mouth of the hero of that story, on the occasion of his encountering at the Crummles' farewell supper the literary gentleman who had dramatised in his time two hundred and forty-seven novels as fast as they had come out, some of them faster than they had come out, and *was* a literary gentleman in consequence." This "literary gentleman" was undoubtedly intended for W. T. Moncrieff, who was for many years connected with various theatres and in particular The Strand, and who did adapt nearly every work that Dickens and other writers of the day sent forth. However, of Mr. Moncrieff and his ways and the ways of others later. There was no dramatic copyright for the British novelist—there isn't very much now—at that time, and Dickens was robbed right and left of the efforts of his genius. Later, however, he arranged with Albert Smith, the author of "Christopher Tadpole," to adapt some of his Christmas works, and so the literary purloiner was more or less thwarted. When the "Pickwick Papers" first appeared in 1836, not only did the "hacks" attached to the minor theatres pounce upon the book as fair game for

their dishonest practice, but there appeared a number of imitations of the work itself, such as G. W. M. Reynolds's "Pickwick Abroad," mostly with the name "Pickwick" with additions thereto. I use the word "hack" advisedly, as these poor wretches were "chained" to the theatre for which they wrote, and frequently the highest honorarium paid for a three-act play would be £5. Even men like Douglas Jerrold had to submit to these outrageous terms. One piracy was called the "Penny Pickwick," and it is a curious coincidence that penny Pickwicks, otherwise penny so-called cigars, came into vogue soon after, and were popular until long after Dickens's death. They may, for aught I know to the contrary, be obtainable still. I smoked them myself as a youth.

Apropos, I quote this from Charles Dickens the younger. "Parodies and piracies innumerable testified to its wonderful popularity; tradesmen used Mr. Pickwick's name as an advertisement for their goods—the cigar known as the penny Pickwick survives to this day. Industrious, if not very scrupulous dramatists seized upon the book long before it was finished—as they afterwards did on other works of Charles Dickens."

The first dramatisation of the "Pickwick Papers" was the "Peregrinations of Pickwick," by

William Leman Rede, at the Adelphi Theatre in October, 1836—exactly six months after the first number of the novel appeared! William Leman Rede was attached to the Adelphi, and was employed by Frederick Yates to provide certain dramatic fare from time to time. The play was published by W. Strange, 21, Paternoster Row, and there is a frontispiece "Designed from a Drawing taken in the Theatre and engraved by W. C. Walker," which represents the Inn yard in the Borough, with Sam Weller polishing boots and singing—

"Ben was a Hackney Coachman rare,
Jarvey! Jarvey!"

Mr. Pickwick, with Snodgrass and Tupman are also on in the scene, and here Mr. Pickwick engages Sam as his body servant. Of course, the play is not a bit like the book. Songs are introduced, and Wallace's "Killarney" is sung in Act I. by Norah, and the curtain comes down in the last act at a fête at Old Wardle's, with a country dance "Ceremony of Mistletoe," and a verse to "St. Patrick's Day," with all the company joining in the chorus! The piece was done again in April, 1837, at the Adelphi. I say no more, but offer the cast of characters.

Clutchley	Mr. O. Smith.
Pickwick	Mr. Yates.
Snodgrass	Mr. Sterling.
Tupman	Mr. Ismas.

JINGLE	Mr. Buckstone.
SAM. WELLER	Mr. John Reeve.
JOE	Mr. Dunn.
PERKER	Mr. Jones.
OLD WELLER	Mr. Sanders.
DR. SLAMMER	Mr. Gifford.
WARDLE	Mr. Cullenford.
HUNT (*a steward*)	Mr. Morris.
WAITER	Mr. Young.
OSTLER	Mr. Smith.

CABMAN, BEADLE, DANCERS, ETC., ETC.

NORAH	Mrs. FitzWilliam.
AUNT RACHEL	Mrs. Young.

EMILY, BELLA, ETC., ETC.

It will be observed that all the principal parts were in the hands of some of the cleverest actors of the day. But where in the name of wonder did Clutchley spring from? Clutchley is a miser, and as the curtain goes up he is "discovered counting gold!" And Snodgrass starts his wild career by borrowing money at the rate of twenty-seven per cent. interest. Here is the "Advertisement" to the published edition of the drama of "The Peregrinations of Pickwick," which it would be a pity to lose: "It may be necessary to explain that this piece was originally written with the episode of the Queer Client worked into it as a serious plot; in this the talents of Mrs. Yates and Mr. O. Smith *

* When altered, Mr. O. Smith of course gave up Clutchley.

and others were employed. The consequence of this introduction was that the drama was rendered an hour too long. After the twentieth night the serious scenes were cut out, and the piece was played as a farce in the shape in which it now appears in print. The unfitness of the Papers for the purposes of the drama I believed ere I began this task, and know now. This version was written when only the eighth number of the Papers was published. At the Adelphi, and in Liverpool, Manchester, etc., this adaptation has been very favourably received, a circumstance entirely attributable to the fact that Messrs. Yates, Buckstone, Reeves, and Mrs. Fitz-William played the principal characters." The piece was done almost simultaneously at the Surrey Theatre, and doubtless had a long run.

"The Pickwick Club" was the next venture, and this was given at the City of London Theatre on Easter Monday, April 27th, 1837, and was the enterprising effort of Edward Stirling. It was well acted, by Macarthy as Jingle, Wilkinson as Sam, and W. H. Williams as Old Weller, and Wrench and Miss Rivers. Then, on July 9th following, "Sam Weller; or, the Pickwickians," by W. T. Moncrieff, was given at the Strand Theatre. This was in three acts, and seemed to attract the public. John Lee, who was sometime secretary to Edmund

MR. W. J. HAMMOND AS SAM WELLER IN "SAM WELLER; OR THE PICKWICKIANS," AT THE STRAND THEATRE, 1837.

[*To face p.* 78.

Kean, made himself famous in this as Jingle; W. J. Hammond, a clever actor in musical plays, was the Sam Weller. He was quite one of the most popular low comedians of his time. Eventually he went to America, where he prematurely died in 1848. As there have appeared many mis-statements as to the cast of this piece, it is now printed in full.

Mr. Pickwick (*founder of the Pickwick Club*)	Mr. A. Younge.
Augustus Snodgrass, Esq., M.P.C.	Mr. Melville.
Tracy Tupman, Esq., M.P.C. ..	Mr. E. Burton.
Nathaniel Winkle, Esq., M.P.C.	Mr. Roberts.
Mr. Wardle (*a fine old English gentleman*)	Mr. G. Cooke.
G. Nupkins, Esq. (*Mayor of Ipswich*)	Mr. Chicheley.
Mr. Leo Hunter	Mr. Nicholson.
Alfred Jingle, Esq. (*a walking gentleman*)	Mr. J. Lee.
Mr. Samuel Weller (*faithful attendant of Mr. Pickwick*) ..	Mr. W. J. Hammond
Mr. Weller, sen. (*a long stage coachman*)	Mr. H. Hall.
Job Trotter (*a dubious character*)	Mr. Attwood.
Master Joseph Dumpling (*the Fat Boy*)	Mr. A. Richardson.

Honourable Simon Slumkey; Horatio Fitzkin, Esq.; Rackstraw; Dogsflesh; Canteen; Alley-campain; Drunken Liberal; Ballad Singer; Match Seller; Turnkey; Grummer; and numerous other characters, by Messrs. Dearlove, Burton, Searle, Chapman, etc., etc.

WOMEN.

MISS RACHEL WARDLE (*sister of Mr. Wardle*)	Mrs. Johnson.
MISS ISABELLA WARDLE (*daughter of Wardle*)	Mrs. Hammond.
MISS EMILY WARDLE (*daughter of Wardle*)	Miss Daly.
MRS. BARDELL (*a widow*)	Mrs. Melville
MRS. LEO HUNTER	Miss E. Hamilton.
MISS TABBY	Mrs. H. Hall.
MARY SUMMERS	Miss Petifer.
MISS LUCRETIA KITCHENER ..	Miss Brookes.

Mrs. Barclay, Boarders, Visitors, Servants, etc., etc.

The parodies in the play include "Vive le Roi," "Nice Young Maidens," "Follow the Drum," "Jim Crow" (good heavens, "Jim Crow" in "Pickwick"!), "Now Rest ye Merry Gentlemen," "We won't go Home till Morning," "Fine Old English Gentleman," "Tramp, Tramp, the Boys are Marching," "There's nae Luck about the House," "Hurrah for the Road," "Hurrah for the Red White and Blue," "Toujours Gai," "Oh dear, What Can the Matter Be," and many more and "We're a' Noddin'." No wonder Dickens arose in his wrath. It is a most villainous concoction, and not to be endured.

Mary Russell Mitford, writing to recommend a friend in Ireland to borrow the "Pickwick Papers,"

said, "Sir Benjamin Brodie takes it to read in his carriage from patient to patient; and Lord Denman studies 'Pickwick' on the bench while the jury are deliberating." Thomas Carlyle told John Forster an anecdote of a solemn clergyman who had been administering ghostly advice to a sick person, and who, as he left the room, heard the sick man ejaculate, "Well, thank God, 'Pickwick' will be out in ten days, anyway." It is related that Father Faber asked for the work on his deathbed. There was no end to the extraordinary interest which it excited or to the stories, real and apochryphal, to which its success gave rise. T. H. Lacy arranged a play from Moncrieff's arrangement of Dickens, and christened it "The Pickwickians; or, the Peregrinations of Sam Weller," and on the printed copy of it it says: "As performed at the Belfast, Cork, and Norwich Theatres, 1837." The introduction is worth quoting, as it is well known that Pierce Egan's "Tom and Jerry" gave the author of "David Copperfield" many hints for "Pickwick." Here it is: "Every age hath its 'form and pressure,' and since the days of 'Tom and Jerry' nothing has appeared in the vast field of literature like the 'Pickwick Club.' The adventures of the above celebrated characters abound with Fun, Incidents, Bustle, Love, Elopements, Song, and Dance, embracing all the varieties

of Life in a most conspicuous and interesting point of view—exhibiting the rich humour of Cervantes united with the pathos of Sterne. The whole has been put into a dramatic shape, to give a 'local habitation' on the stage to the talented efforts of Boz, in which the following heroes are seen to advantage.—Mr. Pickwick relates his exploits with infinite zest, booking all his 'little dodges' with the accuracy of a Cyclopædia; not only for the benefit of the present generation, but for posterity—Jingle also, a rich portrait of human nature,—'*very*'—claims peculiar attention, showing most decidedly that the 'proper study of mankind is man!'—Sam Weller, boots at an inn, a fine fellow for jokes and wit, according to his notions of society, calculated to make his 'wisits pleasant'; yet with his heart in the right place—the Fleet Prison, to wit.—Old Weller, the dragsman, a 'great cigar' either *on* or off his box.—The Love Feast—the Shepherd and his Flocks—united with his feelings of teaching the 'young idea how to shoot'—Rich bits for an annual—the sleeping boy Joe—a nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse; yet 'wide awake' at times—the peculiar talents of the Club; a fine display of eloquence! Bardell *versus* Pickwick—delicious bursts of oratory—the Mistletoe Bough; or, the pleasures of Chaste Salutes—public breakfast—the

advantages of notoriety—the Masquerade; or, this life is like a country dance. '*Le Sage entend a demi mot.*'" This was printed on all the playbills. In "Tom and Jerry" one of the places the Corinthians visit is called Pickwick, and there was a coach run from Hatchett's in Piccadilly to Bath, by Moses Pickwick—indeed, Pickwick was not and is not an uncommon name.

"One of the first writers for the stage to turn his attention to the plots and characters created by Dickens was William Moncreiff," says T. Edgar Pemberton. Now this William T. Moncrieff was an extraordinarily impudent, yet very clever individual, and he had a great following in his day. He adapted every book as fast as it came out, whether the author was Pierce Egan, Sir Bulwer Lytton, Sir Walter Scott, or Charles Dickens. All was fish that came to his net; and though he took plots without asking permission, he actually prosecuted a fellow-conspirator for selling the copyright of one of his own unauthorised dramatisations of another man's work. This was in 1829.

Moncrieff first laid violent hands on Dickens by adapting "Sam Weller; or, the Pickwickians" for the Strand Theatre, July, 10th, 1837, as noted above. Protests were laughed at, and, instead of offering any compensation or apology to Dickens, he printed the

play with the following self-satisfied and remarkable advertisement: "It is almost needless to observe that this drama is founded on the very original, graphic, and clever Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club, written by Mr. Dickens, better known, through his familiar cognomen as 'Boz.' It will be quite superrogatory to point out the numerous instances in which I have been obliged, for the purposes of the stage, to depart from my original, as the Papers are in everybody's hands, and the deviations speak for themselves; it may be sufficient to say, that I have in no instance, I trust, departed from the spirit of my prototype, however greatly I may have been compelled to vary their form and bearing; and that I have endeavoured to make the quantity of original matter I was necessitated to write, amalgamate, not unworthily, I trust, with the materials borrowed from Mr. Dickens. It would have been a much more easy and genial task for me to have written an entirely original work; especially, labouring as I have been, for some time past, under the calamity of, I hope only temporary, blindness; but I was rather piqued than otherwise to do the work. The Papers had been pronounced to be wholly undramatic; two very talented gentlemen, to use a newspaper term, had both attempted the task and failed—the one from sticking too closely

to his original, the other through departing too widely from it. It struck me they were to be *made* dramatic. I knew well their author had never contemplated the production of them in dramatic shape or he would have formed a regular plot, and given a continuity to his work, which alone is wanting to rank it with the finest comic fictions of any age or country. The success of my undertaking has justified my judgment. Some apology is due to Mr. Dickens, for the liberty taken with him in finishing his work before its time; but the great increase of popularity which it must have received from my putting it on the stage, will, I think, more than excuse a step to which I was urged rather by circumstance than desire. Some injudicious friends of Mr. Dickens, among his brethren of the Press (Heaven preserve me from such friends, say I—of course I do not allude to the manly, fair dealing critics of the daily Press, to which I am under the greatest obligations) have chosen to display a soreness at the complete manner in which I have triumphed over all the difficulties I had to surmount in my undertaking. Every wretched mongrel can, I am aware, dramatise the 'Pickwick Papers' now that I have shown them how, by closely copying all I have done; as is the case with a low minor theatre, in the purlieus of London—*once* respectable; but

even the original author will admit that he had never contemplated his matter could have been so compressed and his incidents put in so connected a form as they assume in ' Sam Weller ' ! a character, by the by, which I should think was only an after conception of its creator, and not formed as part of his original projection. Mr. Dickens has, by far, too much genius to nourish any of the petty feelings evinced by his fostering friends ! (this is of course a knock at John Forster) whose articles being those of the ' high, intellectual ' Sunday school of criticism, are greatly too genteel and abstruse for every-day reading, but must be kept for Lord's day examination only. Why these gentry should object to my having dramatised Mr. Dickens, I cannot conceive. Sir Walter Scott, a name I humbly submit, of sufficient merit to be mentioned in the same page with the writer of the ' Pickwick Club,' always looked upon Mr. Pocock's and Mr. Terry's stage versions of those immortal fictions ' Rob Roy ' and ' Ivanhoe ' rather as a compliment than otherwise; and I had undoubted precedent for what I did in the instance of the first dramatic writer of all time —Shakespeare ! who has scarcely a play that is not founded on some previous drama, history, chronicle, popular tale or story." Here I may pause to say that the cases of Dickens and Scott are

not analogous, as both Daniel Terry, and Isaac Pocock were personal friends of the great Scottish writer, and he assisted them in their dramatisations, "having no stage-craft himself." But to finish with the amazing Moncrieff. "What then means the twaddle of these 'high intellectuals' in so pathetically condoling with Mr. Dickens on the penalties he pays for his popularity in being put on the stage? Let these 'high intellectuals' speak to Mr. Dickens's publishers, and they will learn it has rendered them by increasing their sale the most fortunate of chapmen and dealers. It is wasting time to show the absurdity of these addle-pated persons, for their 'blow hot and blow cold' articles are as incomprehensible to themselves as they are to everybody else. In one of them, I am, first of all, abused for having sacrilegiously meddled with any of Mr. Dickens's matter; and then abused for not having meddled with it enough. The reader is told that everybody is pleased with my piece, and is then informed that nobody should be pleased with it. Two or three low scenes between Sam and his father, taken from the original work, are lauded as 'written in a fine spirit of humanity'; while some rather polite dialogues that I have introduced between the ladies are blackguarded by this high intellectual as vulgar."

There is a great deal more of this stuff to the same purpose, and then great praise is given to the actors. As a sample of Mr. Moncrieff's success in "not departing from the spirit of his prototype," says Mr. Pemberton, it may be mentioned that the last scene of 'Sam Weller' shows London on the Accession of the Queen, where the populace in holiday clothes listen to some dialogue between Mr. Pickwick and Sam; and then join all the characters in a loyal chorus to the air Auber's 'God Save the King, Gustavus,' during the singing of which a 'Procession of Heralds, Beefeaters, Guards,' etc., are seen passing through Temple Bar to proclaim the Accession of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, and the piece concludes, amidst general shouts of joy and congratulation, with a 'Grand Tableau.'" Presently we shall see how Dickens got his own back when he wrote "Nicholas Nickleby."

"Pickwick" plays by the dozen constantly appeared all over the country, but these were more or less imitations of each other, and nothing new of any importance was done until January 24th, 1871, when John Hollingshead produced at the Gaiety Theatre "Bardell *versus* Pickwick," "Dramatised by Permission of the Late Charles Dickens. From his Private Copy."

The chief parts were distributed as follows :—

Serjeant Buzfuz	Mr. J. L. Toole.
Serjeant Meek	Mr. H. Vaughan.
Judge Stareleigh	Mr. J. D. Stoyle.
Mr. Pickwick	Mr. Grossmith.
Winkle	Mr. Robert Soutar.
Sam Weller	Miss E. Farren.
Usher	Mr. Fish.
Mrs. Bardell	Miss Emily Muir.
Mrs. Cluppins	Mrs. H. Leigh.
Old Weller	Mr. J. Maclean.

The "Mr. Grossmith" named was the entertainer, father of George Grossmith of Savoy fame, and grandfather of George Grossmith, junr., of the Gaiety of the hour.

Toole, as Serjeant Buzfuz, appeared in the proper wig and gown which were lent to him by Mr. Serjeant Ballantine ; and afterwards the articles were presented to him—a gift he greatly appreciated. This work became a stock piece with Mr. Toole, and it was a feature with many Dickens's revivals at the Gaiety, the Globe, and his own little theatre in King William Street, Strand, now swallowed up by the Charing Cross Hospital.

There was also an arrangement of the trial scene from "Pickwick," by John Hollingshead and Charles Dickens (as per programme) for the benefit of William Belford, at the Lyceum Theatre, December 10th, 1879. The cast was extraordinary.

On October 23rd, 1871, H. L. or "Colonel" Bateman put on a version of "Pickwick" by James Albery, the author of "Two Roses." This E. L. Blanchard declared to be "very bad indeed," though Henry Irving's "Jingle" was pronounced a success. The piece was quickly altered and ran for some time. "Pickwick," indeed, had a considerable vogue. The notices of Henry Irving as Jingle were very flattering indeed, and so they were of his Jeremy Diddler. And yet, after these ephemeral characters, he proved later, as Mathias in "The Bells," adapted by Leopold Lewis, the weirdest tragic actor London had seen for years.

PICKWICK.

Alfred Jingle	Mr. Henry Irving.
Pickwick	Mr. E. Addison.
Sam Weller	Mr. George Belmore.
Job Trotter	Mr. E. J. Odell.
The Fat Boy	Mr. J. Royston.
Snodgrass	Mr. H. Crellin.
Tupman	Mr. E. Dyas.
Winkle	Mr. W. L. Branscombe.
Old Wardle	Mr. Collet.
Old Weller	Mr. Frank Hall.
Rachel Wardle	Miss Kate Manor.
Emily Nupkins	Miss Marion Hill.
Arabella	Miss Minnie Sidney.

James Albery turned his "Pickwick" into "Jingle," a farcical comedy, July 8th, 1878, and the piece was revived, still at the Lyceum, in April, 1887.

SIR HENRY IRVING AS JINGLE.
From a Drawing by F. G. Kitton.

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"Serjeant Buzfuz," a farce, was, says John Hollingshead, given at the Gaiety, November 23rd, 1871.

I have in my possession a printed sketch, entitled "Bardell *v.* Pickwick," without any date, "As represented at the London Theatres," and I have not been able to date it. In the cast, however, were, among others, Stanislaus Calhaem, J. L. Toole, Walter Joyce, David Fisher, R. Soutar, Miss Farren, Philip Beck, Mrs. Mellon and Miss Coveney. I fancy it must have been given at some special *matinée*—either at the Gaiety or the Adelphi. Sir Charles Wyndham, some years ago, did a series of pieces from Dickens at the Crystal Palace, and in 1879 Mr. Walter Mason did "Sketches from Boz" also at Sydenham, consisting of excerpts from "Pickwick," "The Old Curiosity Shop," "Little Dorrit," and other works.

It will be remembered that Old Wardle relates a gruesome tale called the "Story of the Goblins who stole a Sexton," the hero of which is a cross-grained, surly, solitary fellow who is made good-natured and contented by certain remarkable experiences on Christmas Eve. In March, 1879, "Gabriel Grub," a drama in three acts, by Charles Furtado, was presented at the Masonic Theatre, Lincoln, but I have not been able to trace it any further. Mr. George E. Fox also composed the

music to a "Cantata Seria Buffa" called "Gabriel Grub," which was quite popular in 1881 and onwards. Then there was "Bardell *versus* Pickwick"—versified and diversified with songs and choruses. Words by T. H. Gem; music by Frank Spinney; played at Leamington in 1881; and "The Great Pickwick Case," arranged as a comic operetta. The songs by Robert Pollitt; the music arranged by Thomas Rawson. The date is Manchester, 1884.

A most excellent and diverting composition was "Pickwick: a Dramatic Cantata." Words by F. C. Burnand, with music by Edward Solomon; presented at the Comedy Theatre, February 7th, 1889. There were only four characters—

Mr. Samuel Pickwick ..	Mr. Arthur Cecil.
The Baker	Mr. Rutland Barrington.
Mrs. Bardell	Miss Lottie Venne.
Tommy	Master Arthur Knight.

It was all most joyous and amusing.

As examples of "Star" casts the two following bills are not easily to be beaten. The first took place at the Avenue Theatre, June 18th, 1888, for the benefit of Mr. Arthur Roberts.

BARDELL *v.* PICKWICK.

Judge Stareleigh	Mr. Arthur Roberts.
Serjeant Buzfuz	Mr. Edward Terry.
Mr. Skimpkin	Mr. E. J. Odell.
Mr. Snubbin	Mr. Tom Squire.

Mr. Phunky	Mr. J. J. Dallas.
Pickwick	Mr. Edward Righton.
Sam Weller	Mr. Arthur Williams.
Tupman	Mr. George Barrett.
Snodgrass	Mr. Harry Monkhouse.
Usher	Mr. Alfred Maltby.
Crier	Mr. Charles Collette.
Mrs. Bardell	Mrs. Alfred Mellon.
Mrs. Cluppins	Miss M. A. Victor.
Mrs. Saunders	Miss Bessie Bellwood.
Master Bardell	Mr. Charley Ross.

At the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, March 5th, 1907, for the benefit of the Lord Mayor's Cripples' Fund was presented

BARDELL *v.* PICKWICK.

Serjeant Buzfuz	Mr. Edward Terry.
Justice Stareleigh	Mr. Harry Nicholls.
Snubbin	Mr. E. W. Thomas.
Nathaniel Winkle	Mr. Fred Wright.
Pickwick	Mr. J. J. Dallas.
Fogg	Mr. G. Byrne.
Old Weller	Mr. Robert Pateman.
Foreman of the Jury ..	Mr. W. Dexter.
Sam Weller	Mr. Arthur Williams.
Usher	Mr. T. P. Haynes.
Associate	Mr. Ackerman May.
Mrs. Bardell	Miss Carlotta Addison.
Mrs. Cluppins	Miss Fanny Brough.
Mrs. Saunders	Miss Georgina Esmond.
Master Bardell	Miss Iris Hawkins.

Mr. Bransby Williams makes Serjeant Buzfuz one of his special characters amongst others. Miss I. M. Pagan is responsible for "Mr. Winkle's

Wooing," a short play published by Dent; and Mr. Frank E. Emson for "The Weller Family," a comedy in one act, "The Course of True Love," a farcical piece from "The Pickwick Papers," and "Bardell *v.* Pickwick," published by Diprose and Bateman.

I daresay there are other plays written around the life and adventures of Pickwick—his friends, companions and servant, the immortal Sam Weller—but those I have referred to are the most important. To amateurs this subject ever offers tempting fare.

"The Ivy Green," the song introduced into "Pickwick" as a recitation by the *Clergyman*, and "I Care Not for Spring," have been set to music by several composers, but the best known are those made world-famous by Henry Russell. "Bold Turpin" was set to music by Sir Frederick Bridge as a part song.

From far-away Toronto, in Canada, comes a most excellent adaptation of "Pickwick," being the Breach of Promise Trial "Bardell *v.* Pickwick," adapted by J. W. Bengough, and presented publicly in that city in May, 1907. It is perhaps one of the best variants ever prepared.

Bearing the pretty title of "Dingley Dell; or, a Glimpse of the Immortals," a new comic opera written by Edwin Fogg, and composed by D. L. C. Thomas and C. Wright, was played for the first time at the Theatre Royal, Bath, March 25th, 1909.

Mr. J. W. T. Ley, a well-known Dickensian, produced yet another and very creditable "Bardell *v.* Pickwick" piece at the Cripplegate Institute, on December 19th, 1905. In the programme on the same night was Miss I. M. Pagan's "The Gentleman in the Next House," taken from "Nicholas Nickleby." Both pieces made a great impression. "Pickwick" has been set to music more than once in sketch and cantata form, and a very pleasing example emanated from George Soane, B.A., with music by George le Jeune.

Dickens has, as every one knows, been translated practically into every modern language. Mr. Percy Fitzgerald possesses a copy of "Pickwick" in Chinese, and "A Christmas Carol" has appeared in Japanese. In August, 1907, during the Esperanto Congress at Cambridge, a performance of "Pickwick" was given at the New Theatre in that extraordinary polyglot, when the following nationalities were included in the cast: English, Irish, Scottish, French, Swiss, Italian, Bohemian, Spanish. It was reported that the performance of "Bardell Kontrau Pickwick" was the event of the evening, with Mr. Oscar Browning as Pickwick. The "Carol" has also appeared in "Esperanto" form. Its full title is "Kristnaska Sonorado: Kristnaska Rakonto de la Glora Angla Autoro Charles

Dickens Esperantigita de Martyn Westcott." Personally, I prefer "A Christmas Carol."

One would scarcely take up "Pickwick" to drink of "the well of English undefiled," notwithstanding, the following anecdote told by Arthur Locker Lampson has its bearings: "Mr. Dickens (during his visit to Italy) on one occasion, visited a certain monastery, and was conducted over the building by a young monk, who, though a native of the country, spoke remarkably fluent English. There was, however, a peculiarity about his pronunciation. He frequently misplaced his v's and w's. 'Have you ever been in England?' asked Charles Dickens. 'No,' replied the monk, 'I have learnt my English from this book,' producing 'Pickwick'; and it further appeared that he had selected Mr. Samuel Weller as the *beau ideal* of elegant pronunciation."

A French version of "Pickwick" is down for production by M. Gémier at the Theatre Antoine in Paris, this year (1910). It is by Messrs. Robert Charvay and Duval (the translator of Shakespeare). Mr. John N. Raphael writes to me: "I have read this. It is ingenious, but not as true a reproduction of 'Pickwick' as Dickens lovers like ourselves would wish to see. Buffoonery is the key-note, I am sorry to say."

CHAPTER VII

"OLIVER TWIST"

IT was on the night of July 10th, 1905 (the last night of the season), that Sir (then Mr.) Herbert Beerbohm Tree put on Mr. Comyns Carr's adaptation in five acts of "Oliver Twist," at His Majesty's Theatre, when the leading actor of the present time appeared as a most realistic Fagin. It was arranged for a run from September 4th, but, owing to the unsafe condition of the auditorium, it was transferred to the Waldorf on the 26th of the month, and then the play returned to His Majesty's on October 12th. As an important record, I give the full cast of the production.

OLIVER TWIST.

FAGIN	Mr. Tree.
BILL SIKES	Mr. Lyn Harding.
THE ARTFUL DODGER	Mr. Frank Stanmore.
CHARLIE BATES	Mr. Charles Hanbury.
TOM CHITLING	Mr. Reginald Owen.
BARNEY	Mr. George Trollope.
MR. BROWNLOW	Mr. J. Fisher White.
MR. GRIMWIG	Mr. George Shelton.
MONKS	Mr. W. L. Abingdon.

HARRY MAYLIE	Mr. Basil Gill.
DR. SIME	Mr. Francis Chamier.
MR. BUMBLE	Mr. T. P. Haynes.
GILES	Mr. S. Yates Southgate.
BRITTLES	Mr. A. E. Benedict.
JAILOR	Mr. Basil H. Watt.
WARDER	Mr. Alfred Gray.
SERVANT	Mr. Max Montesole.
OLIVER TWIST	Miss Hilda Trevelyan.
NANCY	Miss Constance Collier.
BETSY	Miss Maude Leslie.
MRS. MAYLIE	Miss Adela Measor.
ROSE MAYLIE	Miss Sybil Carlisle.
MRS. BEDWIN	Mrs. E. H. Brooke.
MRS. BUMBLE	Miss Kate Mills.
MAID	Miss Muriel Alston.

On the reproduction, on September 4th, some alterations in the cast took place. Miss Nellie Bowman played Oliver; Miss Jennie Lee the "Great Little Jo" of 1876 and onwards, Mrs. Bedwin; Miss Alma Murray, Mrs. Maylie; and Mr. Frank Stanmore again the Artful Dodger, a most clever study. For the rest, Beerbohm Tree was again Fagin, Lyn Harding "a brutal" Bill Sikes; and Miss Constance Collier an appealing Nancy.

"Oliver Twist" first began to appear in 1837 in *Bentley's Miscellany*, was illustrated by George Cruikshank, and was completed in 1838. It was immediately adapted for the stage, and although it has been frequently acted it has not been invariably successful. The very first drama, hitherto

SIR H. BEERBOHM TREE AS "FAGIN" AT HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE.

Photo by F. W. Burford.

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unnoted, done out of the story which caused such a storm of execration, condemnation, and praise, bore the original title "Oliver Twist," founded on the popular tale by "Boz," March 27th, 1838, at the St. James's Theatre—where "Boz" was well-favoured of the public, in which Edward Wright, J. Webster, Alfred Wigan, Hart, and Miss Allison (Mrs. Seymour), and Mrs. Stirling appeared. *The Literary Gazette*, of March 31st, 1838, said, "'Oliver Twist,' a piece so-called, was produced here (St. James's Theatre), and we regret to say acted with great ability; for a thing more unfit for any stage except that of a Penny Theatre we never saw. We believe it was a benefit piece, but still the management ought to have objected to it." As a matter of fact, it retained its place in the bills for several weeks. About the same time, at the City of London Theatre, Edward Stirling, the stage-manager, was responsible for another play. Then there was one at the Pavilion Theatre, May 21st, 1838, by C. Z. Barnett. The next was by George Almar, a man whose perversions ever haunted Charles Dickens. This piece was acted at the Surrey Theatre, November 19th, with a different ending from Barnett's—that of the murder of Nancy and the death of Sikes—points in the story which only appeared in the previous month of October, when

the story was finished. The piece described as "a serio-comic burletta" in three acts, is of the most gruesome kind. It was called a "burletta" because Covent Garden and Drury Lane were the only legal theatres in London, and they held patents, or were supposed to, which gave them the power to prevent any other house from producing legitimate drama. Notwithstanding which the Adelphi, the Olympic, the Strand, and the Haymarket, "dodged" the majesty of the law very deftly. The cast at the Surrey is interesting—

OLIVER TWIST (*an Orphan Boy*) .. Master Owen.
(*Who has been expressly engaged to perform in this Drama.*)
MR. BROWNLOW (*a retired Gentleman, residing in the neighbourhood of Clerkenwell*) .. .. .. Mr. Cooper.
MR. GRIMWIG (*his neighbour and companion*) .. .. Mr. Cullen.
MR. SOWERBERRY (*an undertaker of a melancholy and poetical imagination*) .. .. Mr. Forbes.
MONKS (*a stranger*) .. .. .. Mr. Simpson.
BUMBLE (*Parochial Beadle of Mudfog, afterwards Master of the Workhouse*) .. .. Mr. W. Smith.
NOAH CLAYPOLE (*an ill-favoured Charity Boy*) .. .. Master Young.
GILES (*butler to Mrs. Maylie*) .. .. Mr. Morrell.
BRITTLES (*her footman*) .. .. .. Mr. R. Green.

THE GANG.

BILL SYKES (*sic*) (*a Housebreaker of a savage and reckless disposition*) .. Mr. E. F. Saville.

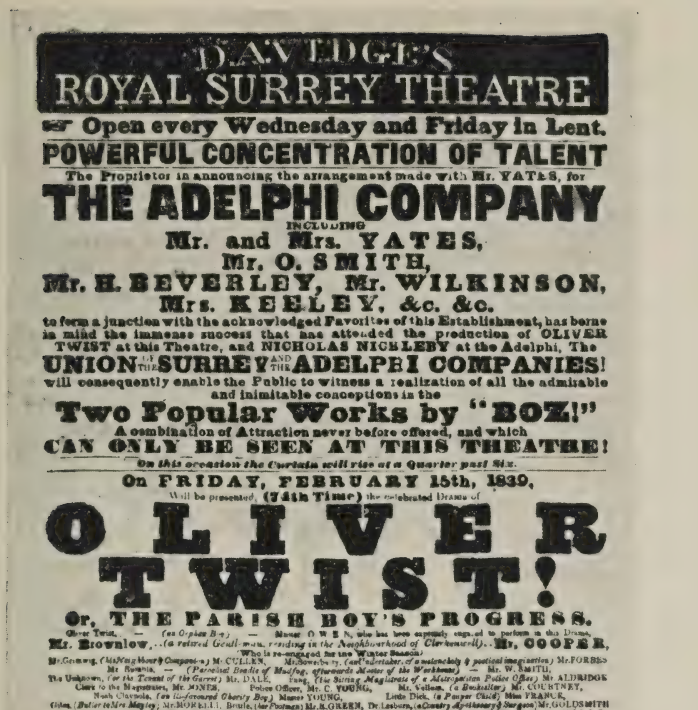
TOBY CRACKITT, otherwise FLASH TOBY (*a Lothario in his own opinion, and one of the swell multitude*)	Mr. G. Almar.
FAGIN (*a Jew, and keeper of a Fence, or Den of thieves*)	Mr. Heslop.
THE BOYS.	
THE DODGER, *alias* the Artful, *alias* Lummy Jack (*a young Gentleman who, possessing no property of his own, is most readily disposed to appropriate the movables of others in more prosperous circumstances*) ..	Mr. Ross.
CHARLEY BATES (*a youth of more mild, merry, and facetious disposition, but still a professor of that easy conveyancing species of business so successfully practised by the Artful Dodger*)	Mr. France.
BARNEY (*Landlord of the "Three Cripples"*)	Mr. Young.
ROSE MAYLIE	Miss Collett.
MISS NANCY	Miss Martin.
MRS. CORNEY (*afterwards Mrs. Bumble*)	Mrs. W. Daly.
MRS. BEDWIN (*housekeeper to Mr. Brownlow*)	Mrs. Lewis.

This "Oliver Twist" was played with "Nicholas Nickleby" from the Adelphi, February 15, 1893.

In the synopsis are given extracts and sketches of the local scenery and incidents "of the most celebrated Novel of Oliver Twist." As a transpontine drama it is very representative of its class. Sikes is spelled properly throughout the play. I don't agree with the following opinion. Charles

Dickens, the younger, wrote: "If one may judge fairly of a piece by reading it, this drama (George Almar's), which was first played at the Pavilion Theatre in 1838 (this, of course, is wrong), and afterwards at the Surrey in the following November, was a very bad play indeed—so bad, in fact, that even the very long list of bad adaptations of popular stories can hardly contain anything worse. The play itself is too wretched for quotation or analysis, but the manifesto which was issued by the Surrey management on the occasion certainly deserves reading."

I give a few extracts from this bill. "The stage is never devoted to a more noble or better purpose than when it lends its powerful aid to improve the morals and correct the vices of the age. It is this conviction which has led to the adaptation of the impressive work upon which this drama is founded, opening one of the darkest volumes of life, and revealing facts that must startle the more strongly, from the previous total ignorance of their existence, even by those persons residing in the very heart of the scenes in which they are daily and nightly passing." Then there is a long quotation from the *Times* of November 13th, 1838, lamenting that the authorities seem powerless not only to prevent crime itself, but to prevent the



MR. DAVIDGE'S
ROYAL SURREY THEATRE

☞ Open every Wednesday and Friday in Lent.

POWERFUL CONCENTRATION OF TALENT

The Proprietor in announcing the arrangement made with Mr. YATES, for

THE ADELPHI COMPANY

INCLUDING

Mr. and Mrs. YATES,
Mr. O. SMITH,
Mr. H. BEVERLEY, Mr. WILKINSON,
Mrs. KEELEY, &c. &c.

to form a junction with the acknowledged Favorites of this Establishment, has borne in mind the immense success that has attended the production of OLIVER TWIST at this Theatre, and NICHOLAS NICKLEBY at the Adelphi, The UNION OF THE SURREY AND THE ADELPHI COMPANIES! will consequently enable the Public to witness a realization of all the admirable and inimitable conceptions in the

Two Popular Works by "BOZ!"

A combination of Attraction never before offered, and which

CAN ONLY BE SEEN AT THIS THEATRE!

On this occasion the Curtain will rise at a Quarter past Six.

On FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15th, 1839,

Will be presented, (74th Time) the celebrated Drama of

OLIVER TWIST!

Or, THE PARISH BOY'S PROGRESS.

Oliver Twist, — (an Orphan Boy) — Master OWEN, who has been expressly engaged to perform in this Drama.
Mr. Brownlow, ..(a retired Gentleman, residing in the Neighbourhood of Clerkenwell).. Mr. COOPER,
Who is re-engaged for the Winter Season.
Mr. Grimwig, (his Friend and Companion) Mr. CULLEN, Mr. Chertsey, (an Undertaker, of a melancholy & poetical imagination) Mr. FORBES
Mr. Bumble, — (Parochial Beadle of Mudfog, afterwards Master of the Workhouse) — Mr. W. SMITH,
The Undertaker, (or the Tenant of the Garret) Mr. DALY, Long, (the Sitting Magistrate of a Metropolitan Police Office) Mr. ALDRIDGE
Clerk to the Magistrates, Mr. JONES, Police Officer, Mr. C. YOUNG, Mr. Vellum, (a Bookseller) Mr. COURTNEY,
Noah Claypole, (an Underground Charity Boy) Master YOUNG, Little Dick, (a Pauper Child) Miss FRANCIS,
Giles, (Butler to Mr. Maylie) Mr. MORELLI, Brittle, (her Partner) Mr. ROGERS, Dr. Losberne, (a County Practitioner) Mr. GOLDSMITH
Bill Sikes, (a House-Breaker, of a reckless and savage disposition) — — — Mr. F. V. SAVILLE,
THE GANG.... Toby Crackit, (expecting soon Toby, (a Lodger in the same opinion, and one of the Small Mutineers) Mr. G. ALMAR,
Fagin, (a Jew & Keeper of a Penn or Den for Thieves) Mr. HERLIEF, Monks, (a Stranger) Mr. SIMMONS,
THE BOYS.... The Dodger, (whose Arts (a young Gentleman who possessing no property of his own, is most readily dis-) Miss ROSS
posed, since Lonesy Jack, I speed to appropriate the moveables of others to more prosperous circumstances,)
Charley Bates, (a youth of more mild, merry, and facetious disposition, but still a professor of that easy) Mr. FRANCIS.
conveyancing species of business so successfully practised by the Artful Dodger,
Mrs. Maylie (a Widow in affluent circumstances) Miss WILLIAMS, Rose Maylie (her Protégé) Miss CULLETT, Miss Nancy, Miss MARTIN
Mrs. Corney afterwards Mrs. Bumble, Mrs. DALY, Mrs Mann (a Matron) Miss YATES, Mrs. Bedwin Housekeeper to Mr. Brownlow) Mrs. LEWIS
Mrs. Sowerberry, — (a Lady, of an accustomed disposition) — Miss YOUNG, Charlotte, — (her Maid Servant) — Miss SHARPE
Susan, — Miss CHARTLEY, Peggy, — Miss BARTLEY.

After which, (FIRST TIME AT THIS THEATRE,) the highly popular Nautical Burletta, by Mr. E. STIRLING, entitled The

Blue Jackets!

Or, HER MAJESTY'S SERVICE.

Admiral Trunnion.....(Port Admiral, Rich and Testy).....Mr. WILKINSON,
Charles Herbert,..(Honourable and Romantic,)..Mr. SIMPSON, Jessamy,..(a Negro)..Mr. MORELLI,
Ben Bunnacle,.....(a Superannuated Seaman).....Mr. O. SMITH,
Mr. Chaser,.....(an Inveterate Master of Arms, commanding the Bombshell Hulk).....Mr. CULLEN,
Fanny Trunnion,.....(Daughter to the Admiral,).....Mrs. YATES,
Betsey Bodkin,—(her Maid).....with a Song.....Mrs. KEELEY,
Solo and Chorus of Sailors.....**"SAILORS LEAD A MERRY MERRY LIFE."**
Lieutenant, R.N. Mrs. YATES, Sunbeaglight, Miss CUSHNIE, Lobcousse, ...Miss YATES, } ABLE SEAMEN
Boatswain, ...Mrs. KEELEY, Longaplice, Miss SHARPE, Powder Blue, Miss BARTLETT, } IN
Rough, ...Miss LEWIS, Squib, ...Miss CLARKE, Martin Spike, Miss CHARTLEY } Her Majesty's
Tough, ... Miss HUNT, Torch, ...Miss YOUNG, Ginger, ...Miss GOWER, } SERVICE.
A HORNPIPE OF 12, with Pike and Cutlass Exercise, by the BLUE JACKETS.

FACSIMILE OF FIRST HALF OF PLAY-BILL OF THE DUAL PERFORMANCE OF "OLIVER TWIST" AND "NICHOLAS NICKLEBY," BY THE ADELPHI COMPANY, 1839.

For second half see p. 132.

[*To face p.* 102.

trainers of thieves and pickpockets from carrying on their nefarious calling. But these things still exist, notwithstanding the vigilance of the police and the stringency of the laws. "Oliver Twist" as a book and as a play carries a strong moral lesson. After referring to the thieves' dens and receivers' shops in London, the management of the Surrey Theatre wound up by saying, "Thus it will be seen in this Drama. Its great original, who, verbally speaking, may truly be termed akin to Hogarth, has raised a beacon on the basis of truth to warn the erring, guide the inexperienced, instruct the ignorant to avoid the shoals by which they are surrounded, and forcibly inculcate the great moral lesson that vice, however prosperous for a time, will sooner or later meet with punishment and disgrace, while virtue, whatever be its trials and temptations, will ultimately secure a lasting and just reward." Although this address is somewhat flamboyant, no doubt it did good, and its general truth is just as applicable to-day.

"Oliver Twist" was really Charles Dickens's first consecutive long story. It came immediately after "Sketches by Boz" and the "Pickwick Papers." The characters were largely drawn from real life—Fagin, Nancy, Charley Bates, the Artful Dodger—all were grasped by Dickens, whose knowledge of

London life, like that of his own Sam Weller, was extensive and peculiar; he had acquaintance through study and work with all the shades of the life he was presenting. George Cruikshank, for some unknown reason, claimed to have originated these characters because, perhaps, he was at first engaged to illustrate the book; but splendid draughtsman as he was, he failed to catch the master's suggestions, and his claim to the idea of the story has been fully routed by all who knew the facts. Before the end of 1838 three other versions were also done, at the Adelphi (with Mrs. Keeley as Oliver) and Sadler's Wells, December 3rd, 1838, with Mrs. Honner as Oliver, and the City of London the same date.

John Forster appears to have forgotten, for no mention of the circumstance is made in the "Life of Charles Dickens," that Dickens twice proposed himself to dramatise or to superintend the dramatisation of "Oliver Twist"—on one occasion for Frederick Yates and on another for Macready.

The offer to Yates of the Adelphi Theatre, was contained in a letter which Edmund Yates, the actor's son, quoted in his "Recollections." No date is given, but it bears internal evidence of having been written before October, 1838, and runs as follows:—

"Supposing we arrange preliminaries for our

mutual satisfaction. I propose to dramatise 'Oliver Twist' for the first night of next season. I have never seen Mrs. Honner to the best of my recollection; but from the mere circumstance of her being a Mrs. I should say at once that she was 'a many sizes too big' for Oliver Twist. If it be played by a female it should be a very sharp girl of thirteen or fourteen, not more, or the character would be an absurdity. I don't see any possibility of any other house doing it before your next opening night. If they do, it must be done in a very extraordinary manner, as the story, unlike that of 'Pickwick,' is an involved and complicated one. I am quite certain that no one can have heard what I am going to do with the different characters in the end, inasmuch, as at present, I don't quite know myself, so we are tolerably safe on that head. I am quite sure that your name as the Jew, and mine as the author, would knock any other attempts quite out of the field." Herein Dickens was quite wrong, as we have already seen. When Dickens went to the Surrey on the invitation of Forster, the latter says, "I was with him at a representation of 'Oliver Twist' at the Surrey Theatre, when, in the middle of the first scene, he laid himself down upon the floor in a corner of the box and never rose from it until the drop-scene fell."

Macready, in his "Diary" Records under date November 8th, 1838, that "Forster came into my room and proposed on the part of Dickens the dramatisation of 'Oliver Twist' with Dickens's name. Nothing could be kinder than this intention of Dickens, but I feel it is not acceptable." Second thoughts did not alter this opinion, and the entry for November 10th says, "Forster and Dickens called and I told them of the utter impracticability of 'Oliver Twist' for any dramatic purpose."

In the Macmillan edition of the novels of Dickens, the eldest son wrote: "Why the offer to Frederick Yates was not accepted I have been unable to ascertain. That the idea commended itself to his mind is certain, for a version of the story—by Thomas Hailes Lacy, I think—was in course of time successfully produced, February 25th, 1839, at the Adelphi."

OLIVER TWIST.

Oliver Twist	Mrs. Keeley.
Bill Sykes (*sic*)	Mr. O. Smith.
Fagin	Mr. Frederick Yates.
Brownlow	Mr. Frank Matthews.
Grimwig	Mr. Wilkinson.
Bumble	Mr. Harry Beverley.
Artful Dodger	Mr. Edward Wright.
Miss Maylie	Miss Fortescue.
Nancy	Mrs. Fred Yates.

The real Christian name of O. Smith, who played

Bill Sikes, was Richard, but having made a great hit as Obi in "Three Fingered Jack," he was dubbed O. Smith to distinguish him from the multifarious possessors of his patronymic, and remained thus known until the end of the chapter. It was Sheridan Knowles, by the way, who, in his half-blundering, half-witty, but wholly Irish way, told O. Smith he was "always mistaking him for his namesake, T. P. Cooke."

Edward Wright, according to Edmund Yates, who knew him very well, was the funniest low comedian he had ever seen. That he was inclined to be coarse we all have heard, but his humour was genuine, and he had "only to walk across the front of the stage, turn a side-look at the house with one of his irresistible winks, and the audience was convulsed."

In 1840 there was produced at the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, an adaptation of "Oliver Twist," by W. H. Murray, who was the manager of the house. Murray was the Bumble; Leeford (Monks) was acted by Ryder; Sowerby, Peddie; Oliver Twist, Miss Saunders; Bill Sikes, Crisp; Fagin, Skerrett; Charley Bates, Power (a very big man, by the way); Brownlow, Redford; Nancy, Miss Cruise; Mrs. Corney, Miss Nicol; and the Artful Dodger, Lloyd.

Thomas Hailes Lacy afterwards left the stage about the middle forties of 1800, which he had followed both as author and actor for many years, and became a second-hand bookseller in Wellington Street, Strand, and eventually a regular publisher of plays. When he died in 1872, the business became "French, late Lacy," and now flourishes amain. It is evident that Macready's adverse criticism as to the dramatic possibilities of the book was right. It has never, or rarely ever, been a genuine success on the boards. An adaptation by John Oxenford, the dramatic critic of the *Times*, was quite memorable in its way. This "Oliver Twist" was produced at the Old Queen's Theatre, Long Acre (it stood at the top, facing Bow Street), April 11th, 1868.

OLIVER TWIST.

Oliver Twist	Miss Henrietta Hodson.
Mr. Brownlow	Mr. W. H. Stephens.
Monks	Mr. John Clayton.
Fagin	Mr. J. Ryder.
Bill Sikes	Mr. Henry Irving.
Artful Dodger	Mr. J. L. Toole.
Bumble	Mr. Lionel Brough.
Nancy	Miss Nelly Moore.

E. L. Blanchard declared this to be a failure—it was a way Blanchard had of damning most things—if his "Diary" is to be relied upon. It had a very prosperous run, notwithstanding. Dickens, as

JOHN L. TOOLE AS THE "ARTFUL DODGER."

From a Drawing by F. G. Kitton.

[*To face p.* 108.

we know, was the first to detect the youthful talents of Mr. J. L. Toole when he was giving some impersonations at the Walworth Institute. It is worthy of remembrance that he also recognised the developing genius of Sir Henry Irving. About the time that "Oliver Twist" had finished its career at the Queen's Theatre, Dickens went to see Henry J. Byron's "A Lancashire Lass," in the cast of which were Charles Wyndham, Sam Emery, Lionel Brough, and John Clayton. On his return home Dickens observed, "There is a young fellow in the play who sits at the table and is bullied by Sam Emery; his name is Henry Irving, and if that young man does not one day come out as a great actor, I know nothing of art." Dickens's prophecy came true when Irving startled London in 1871 as Mathias in "The Bells."

Just about this time—it was May 18th—another dramatisation was done at the Surrey Theatre by J. B. Johnstone, with Edward Terry as the Dodger; Richard Shepherd was the Bill Sikes, and John Vollaire, Fagin. On April 10th, 1869, likewise a "new version of 'Oliver Twist'" was put on the stage of the Alexander Theatre, Camden Town, with John Mordaunt as adapter. This piece was originally performed at the Marylebone, June 9th, 1856. Then there was presented the American

version entitled "Nancy Sikes," by Cyril Searle, at the Olympic Theatre, July 9th, 1878, when Miss Rose Eytinge played the title *rôle.*

NANCY SIKES.

Bill Sikes	Mr. Cyril Searle.
Fagin	Mr. G. W. Anson.
The Dodger	Mr. R. Pateman.
Mr. Brownlow	Mr. C. H. Stephenson.
Justice Fang	Mr. G. Yarnold.
Bumble	Mr. Hammond.
Mr. Vellum	Mr. J. G. Bauer.
Monks	Mr. T. G. Warren.
Policeman	Mr. Daniels.
Butcher	Mr. Ives.
Baker	Mr. Green.
Toby Crackitt	Mr. Bentley.
Charley Bates	Mr. Alfred Phillips.
Nancy Sikes	Miss Rose Eytinge.
Oliver Twist	Miss Lizzie Coote.
Mrs. Bumble	Mrs. Davis.
Miss Maylie	Miss Edith Blande.

Of this performance the *Theatre Magazine* for August, 1878, said some very severe things indeed about the play and the leading lady.

The play is condemned right and left as not only not being suitable for the Olympic, "but would by reason of its utter imbecility be soundly hissed at the Victoria or the East of London." Mr. G. W. Anson, however, receives a good word for his Fagin. The critic mentions the circumstance that Nancy

receives "brevet rank as Mrs. Sikes." Of course the title was absurd, as Nancy was not Sikes's wife, only his mistress.

Of Sir Herbert Tree as Polydore Absinthe de Choufieur in "A Congress at Paris," the farce on the same evening, by Edward Rose, the writer observes, "Mr. Tree, indeed, well known as an exceedingly good amateur actor, once more gives promise of developing into a really effective exponent of eccentric 'character' parts." How well that promise has been fulfilled! Of this performance Sir Herbert himself was unaware, until he was reminded by the present writer in a convincing and agreeable manner.

About forty years ago Dickens was regarded as quite a dangerous person, and the creations of his brain were considered pernicious to public morality. In 1868, to be precise, a facetious member of Parliament asked the Home Secretary in the House of Commons if the Lord Chamberlain had refused to license a play dramatised by Mr. John Oxenford from Mr. Dickens's celebrated work "Oliver Twist," and whether all plays from the same source were to be interdicted as offensive to the feelings of parish beadles. Mr. Gathorne Hardy gave a reply in the negative, but added that a few years previously both "Oliver Twist" and

"Jack Sheppard" had been forbidden. It scarcely seems credible—but facts are stubborn things. "Oliver Twist" used to be revived at the Adelphi and various East End theatres very frequently during the Dickens boom. Mr. J. L. Toole made "Oliver Twist" a stock piece for both town and country, and on several occasions Mr. Arthur Williams has supported him as Bumble, while Mr. Harry Nicholls has often played Mr. Fang. "Bumble's Courtship," a comic interlude by Frank E. Emson (published by permission of Messrs. Chapman and Hall), is in French's Acting Edition, but I don't think it has ever been publicly acted. At the Ladbroke Hall, "Bumble," an operetta by Frank A. Clement, with music by Oliver Notcutt, was produced July, 1891.

"Oliver Twist," a drama in five acts, by George Collingham, was acted at the Olympic Theatre, December 21st, 1891. Writing of this production —it was an American importation—at the time, Mr. Cecil Howard praised the acting of Mr. T. C. Dwyer and Miss Emily Borthwick as Mr. and Mrs. Bumble, and Mr. James Welch as the Dodger, with Vance's old song of the "Chickabary Cove" introduced. Mr. F. Motley Wood was the Noah Claypole, Master Bertie Willis, Oliver; Mr. Henry De Solla, Fagin; and Mr. Bassett Roe was a realistically

brutal Bill Sikes, while Miss Grace Hawthorn touched every one by her sympathetic rendering of Nancy. On August 31st, 1897, an old version was presented at the Novelty Theatre. Also another play of the same name at the Grand Theatre, Islington, March 30th, 1903, from the pen of Oswald Brand, who did several of his own adaptations of the other novels about the same time.

"OLIVER TWIST."

A Version in Four Acts, by Oswald Brand of Charles Dickens's novel.

Produced at the Grand Theatre, Islington, on Monday March 30th, 1903.

Mr. Brownlow	Mr. Tom Paulton.
Mr. Grimwig	Mr. H. V. Surrey.
Monks	Mr. Fred Allen.
Noah Claypole	Mr. Hugh Webb.
Bumble	Mr. C. A. Clarke.
Mr. Sowerberry	Mr. A. Winslow.
Harry Maylie	Mr. Sidney Kearns.
Fagin	Mr. Ivan Berlyn
Bill Sikes	Mr. Arthur S. Leigh.
The Dodger	Mr. Bert Lloyd.
Charlie Bates	Master Garnet Vayne.
Toby Crackitt	Mr. Frank Collins.
Barney	Mr. Charles Weir.
Giles	Mr. Harry Emeric.
Oliver Twist	Miss Isla Garnet Vayne.
Mrs. Maylie	Miss Nellie Clarence.
Rose Maylie	Miss Kate Brand.
Nancy	Miss Helen Bancroft.
Mrs. Corney	Miss Nellie Gillmore.
Mrs. Sowerberry	Miss Gwennie Vayne.

Mrs Bedwin	Miss Amy Francis.
Charlotte	Miss Fay Garnet Vayne.
Betsy	Miss Amy Vivash.
Barbara	Miss Gower.
Janet	Miss May Grey.

In the early months of 1903 the dramatic firmament had a regular shower of dramas from Dickens. Another "Oliver Twist" was presented at the Elephant and Castle Theatre on Monday, April 13th, 1903, being an anonymous version of Charles Dickens's novel.

Fagin	Mr. Trant Fischer.
Artful Dodger	Master Charley Clark.
Charley Bates	Master Garnet Vayne.
Toby Crackitt	Mr. E. H. Dobell.
Bill Sikes	Mr. John Webb.
Mr. Brownlow	Mr. L. Julian.
Mr. Grimwig	Mr. Arthur Gilray.
Monks	Mr. R. Norton.
Bumble	Mr. George Roberts.
Oliver	Little Betty Rochester.
Nancy	Miss Annie Conway.
Rose Maylie	Miss Sybil Thomson.
Mrs. Bedwin	Miss Sophie Maypole.
Mrs. Corney	Mrs. Gordan Gray.
Charlotte	Miss Eva Vernon.

At the King's Theatre, Walthamstow, yet another "Oliver Twist" appeared, October 2nd, 1905, from the collaboration of H. Whyte and Rollo Balmain. And then at the Empress, Brixton, "an Episode,"

entitled "Fagin," was presented, October 28th, 1907, by Mr. Ivan Berlyn.

The very latest edition was presented for one week only at the Broadway Theatre, New Cross, commencing December 13th, 1909. This "Oliver Twist," which was written by Walter Dexter and Frederick T. Harry, had the benefit of Mr. Bransby Williams's talents as Fagin. Of this performance Mr. Arthur Waugh wrote most enthusiastically, and gave high praise to Mr. Williams for his subtlety, and he "perpetually gave one the impression of an intellectual villainy playing with the pawns of mere brutality and ignorance." Mr. Thomas L. Adamson was the Bill Sikes; Mr. Frank Staff the Artful Dodger; Mr. E. Lewis Winn, Monks; Mr. Walter Dexter, Mr. Grimwig; and Mr. F. T. Harry, Brownlow. Miss Marie Lorraine Stevens created quite a stir as Nancy, while Miss Kathleen Marriott made a most pathetic Oliver.

There is one "Oliver Twist" that is a great curiosity, and I fancy has not been written about much before. It was prepared for "Pollock's Juvenile Drama," and was christened "Oliver Twist; or, the Parish Boy's Progress"—the same title that C. Z. Barnett used for his piece at the Pavilion, May 21st, 1838. This was "A Drama in Three Acts." There were six plates of characters,

thirteen plates of scenes, three plates of wings, one set piece. The book complete, one shilling; coloured, two shillings. "Adapted only for Pollock's Characters and Scenes." London: Printed and Published by B. Pollock, at his wholesale and retail Theatrical Print Warehouse, 73, Hoxton Street. Sold by all Theatrical Print and Booksellers. There is a further notification that the "Book of Words" can be had separately, price threepence.

There was a curious sketch entitled "Oliver Twisted; or, Dickens up a Tree," done at the London Pavilion, November 13th, 1905. This was the work of Wal Pink, with music by J. S. Baker. It was in very questionable taste.

In regard to the production of the first "Oliver Twist" at the St. James's Theatre (page 99), I think the following from "Figaro in London," March 24th, 1838, worth quoting: "Determined to finish well Braham announced 'Oliver Twist,' which comes out next Tuesday. We are surprised that this inimitable work has not already fallen into the adapting hands of the dramatists. The idea is an excellent one, and the St. James's Company is, we should think, well adapted to sustain the powerfully drawn characters of the original."

CHAPTER VIII

"NICHOLAS NICKLEBY"

IN nearly all his works Dickens makes references to the stage and the followers of the theatrical profession, but more elaborately and pointedly than in any of the others in "Nicholas Nickleby." Of course, when this novel appeared, the stage was not by any means in a flourishing condition. The two patent theatres were jealous of the other few that had secured licenses, even to play what were stupidly termed burlettas. The little Strand theatre was under a ban, and only struggled on by sufferance, and the only legitimate houses in the heart of London besides the Theatres Royal, Covent Garden, and Drury Lane, were the Haymarket, the Adelphi, the Lyceum, the St. James's, and the Olympic. Sadler's Wells was in the country, the City of London was not opened until 1837; the Marylebone proper—on the site of an unlicensed entertainment house called the Pavilion Theatre—also in 1837. The Surrey, the Coburg—afterwards "Queen Victoria's Own Theatre"—were in existence, but like Sadler's

Wells and those previously mentioned, were only "minor" temples, and were greatly looked down upon by the superfine. In the country there were many reputable circuits and there were many good and many bad companies "on the road" continuously. Vincent Crummles was made to belong to the indifferent in the crowd, and Dickens's caricature was rather cruel, because it is tolerably well known that the original of Crummles was really an expert manager and actor. His name was T. D. Davenport, whose daughter (the veritable "infant phenomenon" of "Nicholas Nickleby") played when grown to woman's estate with some of our foremost actors. The fact is—and Dickens was only human after all—Dickens had a grudge against Davenport, one of the most successful provincial managers of his day, and in 1844 he was manager of the Olympic Theatre when his daughter Fanny Davenport played the leading business. In the *Daily Telegraph* of December 3rd, 1904, there appeared a letter from Mr. Charles Lander, the well-known actor, from which I quote in justice to everybody. First he speaks of an article in the *Telegraph*, and then says, "which contained a reference to Mr. T. D. Davenport, my great uncle, father of the late Mrs. General Lander. The latter, on the death of my parents, adopted me. T. D. Davenport, whose real

name was Donald, was an LL.D. of Dublin University. He married an actress of great beauty, who retired from the stage. Owing to reverses she went back to the stage, her husband becoming a manager on circuit. . . . He was an extremely careful man and one of strong personality and will. . . . That T. D. Davenport had a mean opinion of Charles Dickens I know for a fact. Charles Dickens, who had aspirations as an actor, was a member of T. D. Davenport's company, but he was a genius incapable of committing to memory six or seven important parts a week. Davenport may have failed to realise his genius as an actor. . . . In any case, the wholesome though blunt advice Davenport gave him, which was 'Young man, get back to your scribbling,' may have saved to the world the true genius, and deprived the stage of a shining light only. Charles Dickens, smarting under disappointment, enlarged upon his grievance, and drew the gross caricature of Crummles and his family."

Commenting upon this, the *Telegraph*, in a short leader, remarked, "Those who have once read 'Nicholas Nickleby' never forget the whole preposterous family of the Crummles, gorgeous creatures, eaten up with unbounded self-conceit, and only kept going by their extraordinary vanity. The entire episode is such broad farce that one hardly

regards it as a piece of satire. Yet satire it was, and of a rather vicious type, if we are to accept quite literally a most interesting letter which Mr. Charles Lander has sent to us. It is well known to Dickens students that Crummles was suggested by an actor-manager, of some note in his day, Mr. T. D. Davenport, lessee of a number of provincial theatres. He was a Scot—his real name was Donald—who had abandoned law in favour of the stage. Davenport had a daughter Jean, who made her first appearance at her father's Richmond Theatre at the age of eight. That was in 1837. 'Nicholas Nickleby' began to appear in April, 1838," and so on. Jean Davenport became a very celebrated actress, especially in America, where she died in 1903 at the age of seventy-four, full of honours and highly respected by all who knew her. It is the privilege of genius to borrow from life and transmute in the very act of borrowing. No doubt this is what Dickens did, in a somewhat unkind way, with the Davenports. However, in a way he was more severe with the ubiquitous Moncrieff, because of his dramatic thefts, who continued, notwithstanding the castigations he received in the press over "Pickwick," to dramatise and mutilate Dickens's new works. The character of the "literary gentleman" at the farewell supper

given to Mr. Crummles in "Nicholas Nickleby" caught Mr. Moncrieff "on the raw," and any one reading the chapter depicting that supper to Nicholas Nickleby by the Crummles will see at once that Dickens somewhat over-reached himself, although, in every way, he had right on his side. Moncrieff was so severely bitten that he foolishly responded in this ridiculously high-faluting style.

NEW STRAND THEATRE

"NICHOLAS NICKLEBY."

To the Public.

"Some of the newspapers having named me as the person intended to be represented by an intemperate and vulgar caricature in the last published number of NICHOLAS NICKLEBY, which without such information I should certainly never have suspected, it may perhaps be necessary to say a few words in order to set the public right upon the matter.

"MR. DICKENS complains that I have, in the present very successful adaptation of 'Nicholas Nickleby,' 'finished' his 'unfinished work;' have 'anticipated his plot,' 'which had caused him many thoughtful days and sleepless nights;' that I am a *Richard Turpin*, a *Tom King*, and a *Jerry Abershaw* (that is, presuming he really means me). In fact, that I am nothing more or less than a species of Novel Highwayman, an universal Robber of

Romance, having dramatised no less than *two hundred and forty-seven novels*, as fast as they came out, and very often, *mirabile dictu*, even 'faster than they came out,' though I know not well how that could be. That I have stolen his brains (it would certainly appear that he had lost them), an act which he considers equal in turpitude to stealing his pocket-handkerchief, valuing the one at the same rate as the other, and I know not what other atrocities besides. I certainly plead guilty to having dramatised his work, which I should not have done till it had been completed had not two other playwrights dramatised it before me, a circumstance that did not seem displeasing either to Mr. Dickens or his proprietors, Messrs. Chapman and Hall, as the latter themselves actually published one of the adaptations alluded to, and thus made themselves parties to it." (Note: This was expressly done by Dickens's consent with a desire to combat the pirates.) "Independent of which I did not commence my version till the original work had been nearly fifteen months before the Public, and the *dénouement* was obviously in view—that I should unfortunately have hit upon the same ending of the history as that projected by Mr. Dickens, and thereby have caused him annoyance, I really regret; but there is a very easy way of making me 'hide

my diminished head.' Let Mr. Dickens—and he has five months before him—set his wits to work again and finish *his* 'Nicholas Nickleby' better than I have done, and I shall sink into the primitive mire, from which I have for a moment attempted to emerge by catching at the end of his garment, a fate I shall deserve for my Quixotic foolhardiness for continuing, as he says, 'to drag into the magic circle of my dulness subjects not at all dramatic, cutting, hacking, and carving them to the powers and capabilities' of my 'theatre,' and 'persuading the innocent Public, night after night, to admire and applaud him.' I could wish it were generally agreed that no original Novel, Romance, or Tale should be made use of for dramatic purposes, without the original Author having an interest in such appropriation, but as such is not the case, and the works of novelists, etc., have at all times been considered fair game to the dramatist, without any complaint from their Authors, I do not perceive why I should be expected to become a solitary exception, and be debarred an advantage allowed to others. I never dramatised but *five* novels in my life—Mrs. Opie's beautiful 'Father and Daughter,' Sir Walter Scott's matchless 'Ivanhoe,' Sir Edward Bulwer's masterly and complete 'Eugene Aram,' the 'Pickwick Miscellany,' and, lastly, Mr. Dickens's

very clever 'Nicholas Nickleby.' Had the slightest intimation been conveyed to me, either by Mr. Dickens or his *proprietors*, that my using his work would be disagreeable or inimical, I should immediately have desisted; but the fact is, as in the case of 'Sam Weller,' had the work been less successfully finished, not a word would have been uttered in depreciation of my using it by Mr. Dickens.

"I willingly admit that the common practice of dramatising works before their original authors have completed them is an unfair and vexatious one; but it did not originate with me. I regret Mr. Dickens should have lost his temper, and decended to scurrility and abuse, where a temperate remonstrance alone was needed, but has suffered his irritability to make him forget the good breeding of a gentleman and lose sight of that sense which should ever characterise a man of letters. As one of his admirers, I lament he should have so far committed himself. Mr. Dickens is at perfect liberty, if it will at all satisfy his spleen, to call me the veriest blockhead that ever catered for the stage; the Public have too often decided upon my very humble pretensions to be swayed by his *ipse dixit* now. Great as his talents are, he is not to fancy himself 'Sir Oracle,' and when he speaks no dog should 'bark'; he should

not attempt to 'bestride us like a Colossus' and grumble that we 'poor petty mortals should seek to creep between his legs.' With all possible good feeling, I would beg to hint to Mr. Dickens that depreciating the talents of another is but a shallow and envious way of attempting to raise one's own—that the calling the offending party a thief, sneering at his pecuniary circumstances, and indulging in empty boasts of tavern treats, are weapons of offence usually resorted to only by the very lowest orders. Nothing is more easy than to be ill-natured. I confess I write for my living, and it is no discredit to Mr. Dickens to say that those who know him best are aware he is as much indebted to his pen for the dinner of the day, as I can possibly be. With respect to the '*six hundred generations*' through which Mr. Dickens expects his 'pedestal should remain in the Temple of Fame,' I can assure him I have never anticipated that any credit I might derive from dramatising 'Nicholas Nickleby' would more than endure beyond as many days. Having himself *unsuccessfully* tried the drama, there is some excuse for Mr. Dickens's petulance towards its professors; but it is somewhat illiberal and ungrateful that, being indebted to the stage for so many of his best characters—*Sam Weller*, from Beazley's 'Boarding House,' for example—he should

deny it a few in return. In putting his present Novel upon the stage, there was no intention to injure him, or annoy him; and if it will be any satisfaction to him, I promise him that whatever offence I have committed in the present instance shall not be repeated in the future—at least, by me.

"I cannot avail myself of the liberal offer of 'paying the tavern bill,' as a long and severe illness of nearly five years, with its consequent deprivation of sight, has, during almost all that period, wholly prevented my 'taking my ease in mine inn,' however I might have wished it. And now, hoping that Mr. Dickens may speedily regain his good humour, and indulge in a little more generosity of feeling towards his humbler brethren of the quill, I cordially bid him farewell.

"'Let the galled jade wince,
My withers are unwrung.'

"WILLIAM MONCRIEFF."

"June 5, 1839."

This was not a pleasant quarrel, and Dickens was certainly not well advised by his friends, and they traded too much upon his well-known, if pardonable, vanity. The laws of copyright were in a shameful state in the days gone by, and they are still in a condition of chaos, both for dramatist and novelist. Moncrieff died in 1859—the author

of some score or more pieces contributed to the stage. Moncrieff suggests, in his "statement to the public," that Dickens was indebted to Samuel Beazley's farce of the "Boarding House" for the character of Sam Weller. This is not the case, though there is a slight resemblance to Sam in Simon Spatterdash, who has a trick of this kind of speech: "I will, as the fly said when he hopped out of the mustard-pot," which was quite a common practice with a certain class of "smart" youth, servants, and apprentices of the day. But I don't suppose Dickens ever saw the "Boarding House." It was produced at the Lyceum Theatre in 1811, revived there in 1815 and again at Drury Lane a few years later, and then it was heard of no more. When could he have seen the play?

The writing of "Nicholas Nickleby" caused Dickens a great deal of worry and anxiety, especially towards the end. He wrote to Forster on the subject on a certain Tuesday, and on the Friday of the same week he sent to him: "I was writing incessantly until it was time to dress; and have not yet got the subject of my last chapter, which must be finished to-night." Then Forster speaks: "But this was not all. Between that Tuesday and Friday an indecent assault had been committed on his book by a theatrical adapter named Stirling, who seized upon it without leave while yet only

a third of it was written; hacked, cut, and garbled its dialogue to the shape of one or two favourite actors; invented for it a plot and an ending of his own, and produced it at the Adelphi; where the outraged author, hard pressed as he was with an unfinished number had seen it in the interval between the two letters," which he had posted to Forster. However, let us be just. According to Edmund Yates, so far from Dickens being displeased, the novelist expressed to Frederick Yates, who impersonated Mantalini, his admiration and approval of the representation, and he also praised the make-up and management of certain characters and scenes. Edward Stirling called the piece —a farce in two acts—NICHOLAS NICKLEBY, "Taken from the popular work of that name by Boz." First performed November 19th, 1838.

NICHOLAS NICKLEBY	Mr. J. Webster.
RALPH NICKLEBY	Mr. J. Cullenford.
NEWMAN NOGGS	Mr. O. Smith.
MANTALINI	Mr. Frederick Yates.
SQUEERS	Mr. Wilkinson.
SMIKE	Mrs. Keeley.
JOHN BROWDIE	Mr. Harry Beverley.
MRS. NICKLEBY	Miss O'Neil.
KATE NICKLEBY	Miss Cottrell.
MADAME MANTALINI	Miss Shaw.
MISS KNAGG	Miss George.
MISS SQUEERS	Miss Gower.
MISS PRICE	Miss Grove.
MRS. SQUEERS	Mrs. Fosbroke.

SCENE FROM "NICHOLAS NICKLEBY," AT THE ADELPHI THEATRE, 1838. O. SMITH AS NEWMAN NOGGS, MRS. KEELEY AS SMIKE, AND J. WEBSTER AS NICHOLAS.

[*To face p.* 128.

"Nicholas Nickleby"

In "Nicholas Nickleby," it will be remembered, as I have stated, Dickens is very bitter, and justly so, against the theatrical purloiners of novelists' brains, yet Stirling actually dedicated his "purveyed" property in these words to the rightful owner.

"To Charles Dickens, Esqr.

"DEAR SIR,

"Allow me to dedicate to you your own *Nicholas Nickleby* in his dramatic garb. The exceeding popularity that you have already invested him with must plead my apology for the attempt,

"Your sincere admirer,

"EDWARD STIRLING."

Dickens himself dedicated his book to his life-long friend W. C. Macready, the celebrated actor. The imitations of the novel were so flagrant that Dickens had to invoke the aid of the law to suppress them. Here is a letter that Frederick Yates received from Dickens soon after the performance at the Adelphi:

"MY DEAR SIR,

"I am very glad indeed that 'Nickleby' is doing so well. You are right about the popularity of the work for its sale has left even that of 'Pickwick' behind.

"My general objection to the adaptation of

any unfinished work of mine simply is that being badly done and worse acted, it tends to vulgarise the characters, to destroy or weaken the minds of those who see the impressions I have endeavoured to create, and consequently to lessen the after-interest in their progress. No such objections can exist where the thing is so admirably done in every respect as you have done it in this instance. I felt it an act of common justice, after seeing the piece, to withdraw all my objections to its production, and to say this much to the parties interested in it without reserve. If you can spare us a private box for next Tuesday, I shall be much obliged to you. If it be on the stage so much the better, as I shall be really glad of an opportunity to tell Mrs. Keeley and O. Smith how much I appreciate their Smike and Newman Noggs. I put you out of the question altogether, for that glorious Mantalini is beyond all praise.

"Faithfully yours,

"CHARLES DICKENS."

In July, 1838, "The Infant Phenomenon; or, a Rehearsal Rehearsed," was given at the Strand Theatre. It was adapted by H. Horncastle, who played Crummles. Others in it were the quaint Bob Romer, J. Oxberry, and Mrs. Leman Rede.

"Nicholas Nickleby"

At the Surrey Theatre part of the Adelphi Theatre company appeared in a greatly revised version of the same piece—"Nicholas Nickleby"—February 15th, 1839:

Ralph Nickleby	Mr. Heslop.
Nicholas Nickleby	Mr. Courtney.
Newman Noggs	Mr. O. Smith.
Squeers	Mr. Wilkinson.
John Browdie	Mr. Harry Beverley.
Mantalini	Mr. Edward Wright.
Sir Mulberry Hawk	Mr. Wilson.
Smike	Mrs. Keeley.
Mrs. Nickleby	Miss Lewis.
Kate Nickleby	Miss Chartley.
Madame Mantalini	Miss Martin.
Mrs. Squeers	Mrs. W. Daley.
Miss Knaggs	Miss Sharpe.
Miss Squeers	Miss Gower.
'Tilda Price	Miss Young.

With this, the same evening, was acted "Oliver Twist" for the seventy-fourth time.

Of course the work being completed and published in book form the adapter had every opportunity of thoroughly overhauling and improving his play, which became a stock piece, although we have still another dramatisation from the workshop of Mr. Stirling—

THE FORTUNES OF SMIKE; *or*, A SEQUEL TO NICHOLAS NICKLEBY.

A Drama in Two Acts.

First performed at the Theatre Royal, Adelphi, on Monday, March 2nd, 1840.

CAST.

MR. RALPH NICKLEBY ..	Mr. Cullenford.
NICHOLAS NICKLEBY	Mr. Saville.
MR. MANTALINI	Mr. Yates.
JOHN BRODIE (*sic*)	Mr. Beverley.
NEWMAN NOGGS	Mr. Buckstone.
BROOKER	Mr. Maynard.
SQUEERS	Mr. Wilkinson.
SNAWLEY	Mr. E. H. Butler.
ARTHUR GRIDE	Mr. King.
CRUMMLES	Mr. P. Bedford.
CHARLES CHERRYBLE (*sic*) ..	Mr. Holmes
NED CHERRYBLE (*sic*)	Mr. Johnson.
FRANK CHERRYBLE (*sic*) ..	Mr. Freeborn.
WHACKFORD SQUEERS	Master Brunton.
EXECUTIONER	Mr. J. Shaw.
GUARDS, LABOURERS, WAITERS, ETC.	
SMIKE	Mrs. Keeley.
MADAME MANTALINI	Mrs. Fosbroke.
MRS. NICKLEBY	Miss O'Neil.
KATE NICKLEBY	Miss M. A. Lee.
MRS. BRODIE	Miss George.

In this edition there is a dedication of the piece to Mrs. Keeley, in the course of which the author (Stirling) says: "Allow me to offer you my sincere thanks for the great pains and superior talent evinced in your delineation of the poor heart-stricken boy Smike; the personation shed new lustre on the magic pen of Boz; so gentle, so spirit-breathing, heart-suffering, yet so tuneful, eliciting our sympathy and admiration."

This play was also seen at the Surrey and the

To conclude with (FIRST TIME AT THIS THEATRE) with New Music, Extensive Scenery, Dresses & Decorations, an entirely Original, Ironical, Local Burlesque of Men and Manners, in Two Acts, founded on the celebrated, widely-diffused, extensively-circulated, and universally-admired Papers by "BOZ," written and conceived by Mr. E. STIRLING, called

NICHOLAS NICKLEBY!

Or, Doings at Do-the-Boys Hall!

Mr. Ralph Nickleby, Mr. HENLOP, Nicholas Nickleby, Mr. COURTNEY.
Newman Noggs, — — Mr. O. SMITH.
Squeers, Mr. WILKINSON, John Browdie, *(a Yorkshireman,)* Mr. H. BEVERLY.
Monsieur Mantalini, — *(a Mane-Tailleur,)* — Mr. YATES.
Lord Verisopht, Mr. C. YOUNG, Sir Molby Hawk, Mr. WILSON.
Smike, — *(an Orphan,)* — Mrs. KEELEY.
Mr. Pike, Mr. JONES, Mr. Pluck, Mr. BROWN, Col. Chowser, Mr. ROBINSON.
Senley, Mr. CULLEN, Waiter, Mr. CHAPINO.
Footman to Monsieur Mantalini, Mr. DIXIE, Guard, &c., Mr. B. GREEN.
Mrs. Nickleby, Miss LEWIS, Kate Nickleby, Miss CHARTLEY.
Madame Mantalini, Miss MARTIN, — Miss Squeers, Miss GOWER.
Miss Price, Miss YOUNG, Miss Knags, Miss SHARPE. Mrs. Squeers, Mrs. W. DALY.

ACT FIRST.

SARACEN'S HEAD, SNOW HILL, on a *SNOWY MORNING.*
THE JOURNEY.

Breakfast for Six...Delightful Prospect...Long Ride and short Commons...The Yorkshire Pedagogue...The Introduction...Leave-taking...Good-bye, Mother Just up...All right...The Night-coach for Yorkshire with "The Hero of One Mile and far away."...TABLEAU.

Madame Mantalini's — the Fancy Dressmaker!

First starting in the Wo...ld...Delightful Occupation...High Wages about Short Hours...Kate Nickleby's Introduction to the Mantalinis'...A Deck of a Man.

DO-THE-BOYS HALL, YORKSHIRE.
A WINTRY PROSPECT.

Vision of Avarice...The Arch-Fi...Nicholas Post Acquaintance with the Mistress of the House...Charming Peculiarity of Mrs. Squeers...and Brilliant Prospects at Do-the-Boys Hall...The Letter...The Runaway.

WORK-ROOM at MADAME MANTALINI'S — TABLEAU, (See Work.)

Busses Building...Establishment for Young Ladies...The First Morning...Miss Knags' Philanthropy...A Nice Person...Sportive Enticements, and Family Confusion of Mons. and Madame Mantalini...Pass such a pair!...

SUNDAY PARLOUR, DO-THE-BOYS HALL!

The Pleasures...Tender Proposeties of Mons. Squeers...Oh! 'Tis Love, 'tis Love, that rules the Ring!"...Yes, Cards, & Turn Out...Two Pair of Lovers...York-ire Forever!...Jealousy Mag...& Double Breaking...Nicholas with Sixteen to fall...What the Devil will I do with them?

SCHOOL-ROOM IN THE CLASSICAL & COMMERCIAL ACADEMY OF DO-THE-BOYS HALL.

N.B. Youth taken in and done for...Interesting Course of Education...Brimstone and Treacle...TABLEAUX...New for Pass..."Arrow Physic to the Dogs...Practical Mode of Instructing the Squeerzerian System...A Natural Log e...New Light, Inquisition Detected...Barbarous Usage of the Helpless Orphan, and Many Interlopers of a Nicholas...Quarrel, Blow, and Fight...Nicholas Boys Hall in an Uproar...A Breaking-up and Crammed Row.

ACT SECOND.

BARN AND ROAD-SIDE!

The Orphan Boy and his only Protector...The Journey to London...Unexpected Friend...A Full Purse and a Feeling Heart.

Show-Room at a Fashionable Milliner's!

Touch of the Times...Improvidence, Extravagance...A Regal Tender...Weird Execution...Mantalini's Small Throat & Sharp Razor...A Dun's Breath.

NEWMAN NOGGS' GARRET.

Scanty Cupboard and Warm Welcome...Noggs at Home...A Lover's Letter, Indignation and Determination.

GOLDEN SQUARE—RALPH NICKLEBY'S COUNTING-HOUSE!

Untold Gratitude...Perfect Bliss...Grateful Tenant and Benevolent Master...A Discovery...A Prison...What's good for Man, good for the Master.

DRAWING-ROOM AT RALPH NICKLEBY'S!

TABLEAU...The Money-Lender's Snares...Hooks and Pigeons...Kind Uncle...Deputed Niece...Polarised Guests...Villainy and Avarice, and Happy Turn in the Fortunes of NICHOLAS NICKLEBY!

On THURSDAY and SATURDAY, February 14th and 16th, 1839.

OLIVER TWIST: or the Parish Boy's Progress!

And, for the LAST TWO NIGHTS,

HARLEQUIN and THE ENCHANTED FIGS! or The Little Yellow Man of the Golden Mountains.

And that universally admired Scenic Display,

Mr. P. PHILLIPS' MAGNIFICENT DIORAMA!

On MONDAY next, will be produced an entirely New Drama from the French, entitled

LALLI TOLLENDAL; or, General and the Jesuit

WITH NEW SCENERY AND APPROPRIATE COSTUME.

A NEW COMIC DRAMA and OTHER NOVELTIES are also in preparation.

Second Price 1s. Private Boxes 10s. Pit 3s. Gallery 2s. Doors Price to Pit 2s. Gallery 1s. Children in arms not admitted.
PRIVATE BOXES may be had of Mr. SAMS, St. James' Street, and of Messrs. ANDREWS and MITCHELL, Bond Street.
Applications for Places, Private Boxes, Season Tickets, & Family Boxes to be made to Mr. CHARLES HARRIS, at the Box Office, from 11 till 6
All Applications & Complaints respecting the Internal of the Play Bills, to be addressed to Mr. R. LAWRENCE, Treasurer, at the Stage Door.
Doors open at half-past Five, begin at a Quarter past Six.
Vivat Regina. Stage Manager, Mr. B. S. Fairbrother. B. S. Fairbrother, Theatrical Printing Office, 31, New Street, Covent Garden.

FACSIMILE OF SECOND HALF OF PLAY-BILL OF THE DUAL PERFORMANCE OF "OLIVER TWIST" AND "NICHOLAS NICKLEBY" BY THE ADELPHI COMPANY, 1839.

For first half see p. 102.

[*To face p.* 132.

Marylebone Theatres, and the City of London Theatre, November 19th, 1838. At the latter house it bore the sub-title of "Or, The Schoolmaster Abroad and At-Home." In the cast were Mr. and Mrs. E. Green and Miss Vincent. A second edition was played March 11th, 1839. Then on December 20th, 1838, there was a purely local adaptation presented at the Theatre Royal, Hull, called "Nicholas Nickleby; or, Doings at Do-the-Boys-Hall," in which Mr. and Mrs. H. Mellon appeared.

Quite a different version (most likely by Dibdin Pitt) came out at the City of London Theatre in November, 1840.

NICHOLAS NICKLEBY.

Ralph Nickleby	Mr. James.
Nicholas Nickleby	Mr. W. Seaman.
Smike	Miss E. Vincent.
Cherryble	Mr. Wilton.
Squeers	Mr. Dibdin Pitt
Master Squeers	Miss Wilton.
Newman Noggs	Mr. Dunn.
Crummles	Mr. J. Gardner.
Master Crummles	Master Cecil Pitt.
Brookes	Mr. Henry Howard.
Lenvilee	Mr. C. Williams.
John Browdie	Mr. J. Howard.
Folair	Mr. Scarbrow.
Ben Dibbs	Mr. Hitchenson.
Mrs. Nickleby	Mrs. G. Lee.
Kate	Mrs. J. Howard.
Mrs. Squeers	Mrs. Woulds.
Mrs. Crummles	Mrs. Wilton.

There was also a "Nicholas Nickleby," acted at the Victoria Theatre in March, 1857, in which the parts were represented by Messrs. Henderson, W. H. Pitt, W. Warlow, A. Saville, J. Bradshaw, Fred Byefield, G. Pearce, and F. H. Henry; Miss Young, Mrs. Warlow, Miss Bailey, Miss Edgar, Miss Barrowcliff, Mrs. Nelson. The characters of Miss Squeers and 'Tilda Price do not appear. Then Mr. W. H. C. Nation did a version at Astleys in 1864. A little-known production was that of a play called "Do-the-Boys-Hall," in three acts, by J. Daly Besmeres, presented at the Court Theatre, December 26th, 1871.

Squeers	Mr. Edward Righton.
John Browdie	Mr. W. J. Hill.
Nicholas Nickleby	Mr. Alfred Bishop.
Ralph Nickleby	Mr. Arthur Wood.
Snawley	Mr. H. Leigh.
Smike	Miss Santon.
Mrs. Squeers	Mrs. Stephens.
Miss Squeers	Miss Maggie Brennan.
'Tilda Price	Miss Rose Coghlan.

The old playgoer will recognise in this a splendid cast, and the new playgoer will, perhaps, marvel to see Mr. Alfred Bishop set down as playing juvenile lead.

On March 20th, 1875, the very best play on the subject, prepared by Andrew Halliday, was performed at the Adelphi Theatre.

NICHOLAS NICKLEBY.

Nicholas Nickleby	Mr. W. Terriss.
Ralph Nickleby	Mr. James Fernandez.
Squeers	Mr. John Clarke.
Newman Noggs	Mr. George Belmore.
John Browdie	Mr. Sam Emery.
Brooker	Mr. J. G. Shore.
Snawley	Mr. C. J. Smith.
Smike	Miss Lydia Foote.
Mrs. Nickleby	Mrs. Addie.
Kate Nickleby	Miss Edith Stuart.
'Tilda Price	Miss Hudspeth.
Miss Squeers	Miss Harriet Coveney.
Mrs. Squeers	Mrs. Alfred Mellon.

On this first night the curtain rose at seven on the popular farce of "Sarah's Young Man," and the entertainment concluded with the Vokes Family in "Belles of the Kitchen." "Nicholas Nickleby" was revived at the same theatre in 1879, when Mr. E. H. Brooke was the Nicholas; J. G. Taylor, Squeers; Herman Vezin, Newman Noggs; Henry Neville, John Browdie; R. Pateman, Brooker; F. W. Irish, Snawley; Miss Emily Heffer, Mrs. Nickleby; Miss Emily Duncan, Kate; and Miss Clara Jecks, 'Tilda, The other parts were in the care of the original exponents.

I have a note of an unpublished "Nicholas Nickleby: An episodic sketch in Three Tableaux.' John S. Clarke, quaintest of character actors in old English plays, although he was an American by

birth, played Newman Noggs for some time at the Strand Theatre from September 10th, 1885. The full cast was as under—

NICHOLAS NICKLEBY.

NEWMAN NOGGS..	Mr. John S. Clarke.
SQUEERS	Mr. Richard Purdon.
RALPH NICKLEBY	Mr. H. R. Teesdale.
NICHOLAS NICKLEBY	Mr. Creston Clarke.
JOHN	Mr. C. Wilfred.
JENKINS	Master Norton.
WAITER	Mr. P. R. Macnamara.
SMIKE	Miss Marie Hudspeth.
MRS. SQUEERS	Miss C. Ewell.
KATE NICKLEBY	Miss Grace Arnold.

The *Era* speaks very scathingly about this piece, and says "Contemptible from the point of view of art as the piece is; it serves as an excuse for some acting which is by no means to be contemned. . . . A judicious silence is, we observe, maintained on the bill as to the authorship of this adaptation, which is understood to have been previously played in the United States."

Smike did not die, but tried to pronounce a "tag" to the concoction. A violation that was enough to make Dickens turn in his grave.

Finally "Nicholas Nickleby," a drama in four acts, adapted by H. Simms, was first performed at the Theatre, Brighton, in 1875, with a good cast. In May, 1887, Fred Leslie appeared at a *matinée*

as Newman Noggs at the Gaiety Theatre, though John Hollingshead does not record the fact. It was for the benefit of Miss Nelly Farren, and she played Smike so exquisitely as to draw tears from a crowded house, and to receive the praise of Mrs. Keeley, the "creator" of the part.

Edward Stirling relates the following anecdote concerning a performance given at Worthing for his benefit: "Nicholas Nickleby" was announced. "Without the Dotheboys Hall scholars this could not take place however. And here was the awkward dilemma. Worthing mothers of the poorer class did not countenance play-acting, believing Old Nick to be in some way connected with it. A local Figaro helped me out of my difficulty. The professor of the razor did a bit of most things at his odd and leisure moments. He was a performer on the French horn, a bird-fancier, newsvendor, corn-cutter — Heaven knows what besides — a regular Caleb Quotem in short. 'I'll get you fifty, sir, never fear,' and he was as good as his word. Lured from the by-streets and alleys by his horn, like the children in the 'Pied Piper of Hamelin,' the small fry followed him to the theatre yard; once there, Figaro closed the gates upon Mr. Squeers's children. Amidst crying and moaning they were placed on the stage, sitting on benches, and kept

in order by Figaro's cane—poor children!—completely bewildered. When the treacle was administered most of them cried. This delighted the audience, thinking it so natural (so it was). At nine o'clock, the act over, our cruel barber threw open the gates, driving his flock out, with a pleasant intimation of what they would catch when they arrived home. Mothers, fathers, sisters, in wild disorder, had been scouring the town for their runaways, and the police were completely puzzled and at their wit's end at such a wholesale kidnapping. Figaro was nearly torn to pieces when the truth was discovered."

On August 28th, 1875, there was an American version of the story presented at the Royal Amphitheatre, Liverpool, without the name of the author being announced.

In *Fraser's Magazine* for March, 1842, there is a most amusing account from the pen of W. M. Thackeray, of a performance of a stage version of "Nicholas Nickleby," given at the Ambigu Comique Theâtre, Paris.

I give an exact copy of the play-bill.

NICOLAS NICKLEBY,

OU LES MENDIANS DE LONDRES.

Drama en Cinq Actes et Six Tableaux

Par MM. Prosper Dinaux et Gustave Lemoine.

JOSEPH JEFFERSON AS NEWMAN NOGGS.

[*To face p.* 138.

"Nicholas Nickleby"

Représenté pour la première fois, à Paris, sur le théâtre de l'Ambigu-Comique le 29 janvier, 1842.

DISTRIBUTION DE LA PIÈCE.

NICOLAS NICKLEBY..	MM. Albert.
JOHN BROWDIE (*fermier*)	Saint-Ernest.
RALPH (*banquier*)	Chilly.
LE COMTE DE CLARENDON (38 *à* 40 *ans*)	Anatole Gras.
SQUEERS (*maître d'école*)	Boutin.
PROSPECTUS (*élève de M. Squeers*) ..	Charles Pérey.
BECKER (*ancien affidé de Ralph*)	Charnoz.
BELJAMBE (*cul de jatte*)	Alexandré.
UN JEUNE LORD	Bertollet.
SMIKE (*enfant élève par charité*, 15 *ans*) ..	Mlles. Prosper.
MADELEINE CLARENDON (*fille du Comte*)	Davenay.
CATHERINE NICKLEBY (*sœur de Nicolas*)	Racine.
L'HÔTESSE DE LA TAVERNE	Sylvia.

UN SHÉRIFF. UN CONSTABLE. UN MÉDECIN. UN GARÇON DE THÉÂTRE ET UN GARÇON DE TAVERNE. JEUNES SEIGNEURS. ÉLÈVES DE M. SQUEERS. MENDIANS ET MENDIANTES. ETC., ETC.

Le premier acte se passe dans un petit village du Northumberland; le deuxième, a troisième, le quatrième et le cinquième, à Londres.

The French play, according to Thackeray, contained many glaring, not to say outrageous, excrescences, and the departures from the story as told by Dickens would be inexcusable if they were not, as told by Thackeray, so intensely amusing.

When "Nicholas Nickleby" was first acted in America, Joseph Jefferson made a great impression as Newman Noggs.

CHAPTER IX

"THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP"

IN the summer of 1839 Dickens first got the idea of bringing out a weekly publication, to be called "Master Humphrey's Clock," in which his new story—"The Old Curiosity Shop"—became one of the chief attractions, with other interesting matter from other writers. That was the original scheme. Writing in the summer of 1870, Theodore Taylor said: "The first number of 'Master Humphrey's Clock' appeared on the 4th of April, 1840. Not content with the unexampled success which had attended the issue of 'Nicholas Nickleby' in shilling numbers, the publisher conceived the mistaken idea of altering the size of Mr. Dickens's new work. . . . Messrs. Cattermole and 'Phiz' (Hablot K. Browne) had undertaken the illustrations, and the work proceeded; but it soon became a matter of policy, or rather of necessity, to revive the public interest; and this was done by the resuscitation of Mr. Pickwick and the two Wellers—father and son. Thus helped

forward, the new work began to make its way steadily; and the two principal tales, 'The Old Curiosity Shop' and 'Barnaby Rudge,' are among the best and most popular of Mr. Dickens's stories." Eventually the author thought fit to separate the stories, which were issued in complete form together, and "Master Humphrey's Clock," said the author himself, "became one of the lost books of the earth—which, we all know, are far more precious than any that can be read for love or money."

Several of the characters in "The Old Curiosity Shop" were drawn from real life, and they had their prototypes in the unlucky days, in Dickens's own early years, of the Marshalsea and the blacking warehouse at Hungerford Stairs. The Marchioness was first suggested by the maid-of-all-work who waited upon the Dickens family in Bayham Street, Camden Town. She originally came from the Chatham workhouse. The Garlands were drawn from the landlord and his family where Dickens resided. Mr. Garland "was a fat, good-natured, kind old gentleman. He was lame, and had a quiet old wife; and he had a very innocent grown-up son, who was lame too." The poetical Mr. Slum was derived from the ingenious gentleman who wrote the rhyming advertisements in praise of Warren's blacking. The story was dedicated to

Samuel Rogers, the banker-poet, and Dickens said: "It is a great pleasure to me to add that for a beautiful thought in the last chapter but one of 'The Old Curiosity Shop,' I am indebted to Mr. Rogers. It is taken from his charming tale 'Ginevra.'

> "'And long might'st thou have seen
> An old man wandering as *in quest of something*.
> Something he could not find—he knew not what.'"

In the first volume of "Peter Parley's Penny Library," edited by Samuel Goodrich, under the pseudonym of Peter Parley, were a number of selections from the novel in the form of dialogues to be recited and given as scenes and small plays. Dickens naturally was greatly incensed at this wholesale piracy and said so, which had the result of giving him considerable satisfaction.

"The Old Curiosity Shop" has ever been a favourite with the theatrical adapter, and before the story was finished several versions were seen on the public stage. Not only that, there was actually a "Master Humphrey's Clock" done in just two months after the first number appeared. This was by Frederick Fox Cooper, a notorious annexer of other men's brains, and was first acted at the Victoria Theatre, May 26th, 1840. It was thus set forth in the bills (the play was printed in Cumberland's "British Theatre"):

"The Old Curiosity Shop"

MASTER HUMPHREY'S CLOCK.

A Domestic Drama in Two Acts. Founded on the first story in the work of Charles Dickens.

JOE TODDYHIGH	Mr. C. Bender.
MASTER HUMPHREY (*the Deformed*)	Mr. Harding.
GILBERT GRAY (*of Grayling, a Cavalier, and a Gay Gallant*)	Mr. Hicks.
MASTER HARGREAVE HARTLEY (*the Unknown*)	Mr. Dale.
SIMON TRADELOVE (*the Antiquary*)	Mr. Burton.
CHRISTOPHER CURIOUS (*the City Apprentice*)	Mr. Manders.
DYKE OF THE FERRY (*a Reprobate and Cutpurse*)	Mr. Courtney.
JASPER	Mr. Morton.
MARTIN	Mr. Hitchenson.
HUBERT (*Esquire to Gilbert*) ..	Mr. McDonald.
ELINOR (*the Child of Mystery*) ..	Mrs. Howard.
ALICE (*the Tenant of the Lone House*)	Miss Cooke.

GUARDS, CITY WATCH, ROYSTERERS, CUTPURSES, ETC.

The representative of Gilbert Gray was the celebrated N. T. or "Brayvo Hicks," beloved alike of the groundlings and the gods. Toddyhigh is a sort of Christopher Sly, and is seen no more after delivering—

THE PROLOGUE.

Drop Scene representing Ancient Guildhall. Figures of Gog and Magog. (*See the plate in No.* 1.)

Music. Toddyhigh discovered asleep on the ground. Rises and looks round—rubbing his eyes, etc.

Here's a fuss, indeed! bar rigmarole,
A feast of reason and a flow of soul.
(*Clock strikes one.*)
In the good days of early rhyme and fun,
When fearing bogies, boys have cut and run,
I do remember me, a nursery tale
So very marvellous—'twas very like a whale.
'Tis said when they (*points to figures*) should hear it strike
the hour
They'd take a chop in some snug looking bower;
A clock has struck, and now they ask the way
Of Master Humphrey, to the Victoria play.
They heard him strike—his fame they now behold;
And as they crossed the bridge they there were *toll'd*.
Arrived—the Lessee he began to stare,
And wondered why they left behind—the Mayor.
In haste they entered—the Lessee led the way—
They were so high, they could not stoop to pay;
And like the nobs—I speak to their disgrace—
They came so late, they could not find the place.
And now, one word about our play to-night,
The why and wherefore that has made us write,
'Tis Boz composes with such railroad speed
He leaves unfinished half of what we read.
We beg a hearing—perhaps he'll make no quail—
He gives a head—we furnish forth a tale.
He the Colossus great—we side by side,
The pigmy men that 'neath his legs must stride.
We have no monstrous puff to aid our cause,
But trust to your good sense for your applause—
With smiling faces then I see our champions sit,
The critics of the Gallery, Box and Pit.
We argue hence, that nightly you will flock—
If not to Master Humphrey, at least our Clock;
For which, fair dames and sirs, we nightly pray,
For your applause will be—the time of day!

Exit L. H.

"The Old Curiosity Shop"

The first acting version of the "Old Curiosity Shop" itself was by Edward Stirling. This was described on the day bills as "a Burletta in Two Acts; founded on the celebrated, widely circulated, and universally admired papers by Boz." On the title-page of the printed book, however, it is simply called "a drama in two acts." The sub-title was "or, One Hour from Humphrey's Clock." This piece was done at the Adelphi Theatre, November 9th, 1840.

Master Humphrey	Mr. Maynard.
The Grandfather	Mr. Thos. Lyon.
Kit..	Mr. Wilkinson.
Little Nell	Mrs. Keeley.
Fred Trent	Mr. J. F. Saville.
Dick Swiveller	Mr. E. Wright.
Quilp	Mr. Fredk. Yates.
Brass	Mr. Griffin.
Tom Codlin	Mr. Paul Bedford.
Short Trotters	Mr. Wieland.
Boy	Master Thomas.
Mr. Garland	Mr. Cullenford.
Mrs. Garland	Mrs. Pearse.
Mrs. Quilp	Miss Lee.
Mrs. Simmonds	Miss O'Neil.
Mrs. George	Mrs. Gower.
Mrs. Nobsclaw	Miss Sidney.
Mrs. Jinwin	Mrs. Fosbroke.

On October 4th, 1853, "The Old Curiosity Shop," dramatised by an unnamed writer, was done by E. T. Smith, at Drury Lane Theatre. It

was for one performance only. G. V. Brooke had to appear at Cambridge, and returned for the next night for "Virginius," in which he was starring.

Andrew Halliday once again showed his skill as an adapter, and provided the Olympic Theatre with a very interesting drama in "Nell," November 19th, 1870.

NELL; OR, THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.

GRANDFATHER	Mr. George Belmore.
QUILP	Mr. John Clarke.
DICK SWIVELLER	Mr. David Fisher.
SAMPSON BRASS	Mr. W. Blakeley.
KIT	Mr. George Elliot.
FRED TRENT	Mr. H. St. Maur.
SHORT	Mr. E. W. Garden.
CODLIN	Mr. Butler.
JOWL	Mr. E. Newbound.
TOM SCOTT	Mr. H. Jordan.
NELL	Miss Florence Terry.
MRS. JARLEY	Miss Charlotte Saunders.
SALLY BRASS	Mrs. Poynter.
THE MARCHIONESS	Miss Eliza Johnstone.
MRS. QUILP	Mrs. Joseph Irving.
MRS. JINIWIN	Miss Ewell
MRS. GEORGE	Miss Sutherland.
MRS. SIMMONDS	Miss Ashton.

The Nell, Miss Florence Terry, a charming actress, the youngest sister of Ellen Terry, who died all too soon, was excellent in the title *rôle*.

Mr. Murray Wood, who played the Grandfather and Dick Swiveller, prepared a version for his wife, Miss Virginia Blackwood, at one time a very popular

transpontine actress, which first saw the footlights at the Surrey Theatre, November 23rd, 1872, where she played a round of plays based on the novelist's works. Subsequently, in 1877, she revived the piece, which was christened "Little Nelly," at the Royal Park Theatre, Camden Town, and also in the same year at the Royal Aquarium Theatre, Westminster. Long associated with Virginia Blackwood was Mr. Harry Cornwall, a very capable comedian, Miss Lilian Adair, Miss Kate Graham, and Miss Jane Rignold. In the eighties Miss Blackwood migrated with her company to Astley's Theatre in the Westminster Bridge Road, where later Lord George Sanger reigned supreme. Charles Rice, who, in 1873–4–5 provided the pantomimes for Covent Garden, also perpetrated a drama on the subject.

In 1873 "Mrs. Jarley's Far-Famed Collection of Waxworks," by G. B. Bartlett, was presented somewhere in town—but I know not where. Then George Lander gave "The Old Curiosity Shop," a drama in four acts, at the Theatre Royal, York, May 14th, 1877. In this Miss Katie Logan doubled the parts of the Marchioness and Little Nell. Supporting her were Miss E. Miller, Miss Oliph Webb, and Messrs. Duncan Campbell, Whit Rogerson, C. E. Stevens, T. W. Rogerson, and Jessie St. Clair. In March,

1881, Mr. Fred J. Stimson toured the provinces, commencing at Liverpool with "The Old Curiosity Shop," prepared by Joseph Mackay and Horace Lennard. At the Opera Comique, in 1884, another dramatisation was done, of which Charles Dickens the younger wrote: "An adaptation of my own, which was produced at the Opera Comique in January 12th, 1884, was deprived of any merit it may have possessed by the interpolation by the American lady for whom I wrote the piece (she doubled Nell and the Marchioness) of a preposterous act from a ridiculous version by Mr. John Brougham, which she had been accustomed to play in the States." However this may be, it was generally conceded at the time that Lotta (her surname was Crabtree) was the best representative of both characters hitherto seen. She had adequate support, and it was acknowledged on all hands that Mr. Frank Wyatt completely realised the humour of Dick Swiveller.

THE OLD CURIOSITY SHOP.

The Marchioness and Nell	Miss Lotta.
Swiveller	Mr. Frank Wyatt.
Quilp	Mr. Robert Pateman.
Brass	Mr. Howard Russell.
Grandfather	Mr. Stanislaus Calhaem.
Fred Trent	Mr. Cecil Rayne.
Mr. Witherdean	Mr. T. Merridew.
Jowl	Mr. Henry.

List	Mr. James.
Slum	Mr. J. Phipps.
Kit	Mr. Charles Coote.
Sally Brass	Miss Fanny Coleman.
Mrs. Jarley	Miss T. Lavis.
Mrs. Quilp	Miss Bella Howard.

Robert Pateman's Quilp was a "revelation" in realistic acting. The Marchioness and Dick Swiveller are joyous characters such as Dickens delighted to depict, and such as many dramatists have under various disguises interpolated in the lists of *dramatis personæ* of their plays. "An Angel on Earth" was the title chosen by Alfred M. Dalor for his version of "The Old Curiosity Shop," presented at the Theatre Royal, St. Helen's, February 12th, 1902, and again in the following September, and I believe on tour.

"Little Nell"—dramatised by David James, the clever son of the creator of Perkyn Middlewick, "Inferior Dosset" in "Our Boys"—was produced at the Pier Pavilion, St. Leonards, January 20th, 1902. At the Grand Theatre, February 23rd, 1903, Mr. Oswald Brand gave his view of "The Old Curiosity Shop" in yet another "Little Nell," in which Mr. Ivan Berlyn made a hit as Quilp: an actor, by the way, who has also done a number of Dickens's characters on the Variety Stage. "The Marchioness," an operetta by B. W. Findon and Edward Jones was played

at His Majesty's Theatre, June 23rd, 1904, on the occasion of the Clement Scott benefit *matinée*. And there are many other adaptations, including one by the present writer, called "Dick Swiveller."

A very pretty ballad describing the death of Little Nell, written by Miss Charlotte Young and composed by George Linley, was an especial favourite with Charles Dickens, to whom the effusion was dedicated. He was very fond indeed of the song, and his eldest daughter had been in the habit of singing it to him constantly since she was quite a child.

They told him, gently, she was dead,
And spoke of heaven and smiled;
Then drew him from the lonely room
Where lay the lovely child.
'Twas all in vain, he heeded not
Their pitying looks of sorrow;
"Hush! hush!" he cried, "she only sleeps;
She'll wake again to-morrow."

They laid her in her lonely grave,
Where winds blew high and bleak,
Though the faintest summer breeze had been
Too rough to fan her cheek.
And there the poor old man would watch
In strange though childish sorrow,
And whisper to himself the words,
"She'll come again to-morrow."

One day they missed him long and sought
Where most he loved to stray;
They found him dead upon the turf
Where little Nellie lay.

With tottering steps he'd wandered there,
Fresh strength and hope to borrow,
And, e'en in dying, breathed this prayer,
"Oh, let her come to-morrow."

After the death of the novelist there was quite an epidemic of Dickens, and the dramas from his works were revived and new ones produced in almost every capital and theatrical town in Great Britain. For instance, "Grandfather's Little Nell" was a drama done at the Theatre Royal, Bristol, December 3rd, 1870, while two days later "Dick Swiveller," by Charles Rennell, appeared at the Theatre Royal, Brighton. This was in four acts, and I expect Rennell, who was a clever but very eccentric actor, undertook the part of the versatile Dick. On February 6th, 1871, "The Old Curiosity Shop; or, the Life and Death of Little Nell," by W. Sidney, was performed at the Theatre Royal, Norwich. Then on April 8th, at the Bradford Theatre Royal, "Gentle Nelly" was put on, and on the 10th "Quilp; or, the Wanderings of Little Nell," at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, Wolverhampton. This was by T. G. Paulton. "Poor Nell," by Edward Price, saw the light at the Theatre Royal, Aberdeen, November 18th, 1872. And doubtless there were many patchwork and other plays on the subject prepared. It is wonderful to contemplate the money

that must have been made out of Dickens's books from first to last—and the adapters are still busy.

I have myself just upon fifty printed plays based on the novels of the immortal creator of "Pickwick"—and programmes more than I can count.

The very latest edition was by Oswald Brand, produced at the Grand Theatre, Islington, on February 23rd, 1903, to which I have already referred.

LITTLE NELL.

DANIEL QUILP	Mr. Ivan Berlyn.
THE GRANDFATHER	Mr. Tom Paulton.
SAMSON BRASS	Mr. Frank Collins.
RICHARD SWIVELLER	Mr. Albert Harding.
THE SINGLE GENTLEMAN ..	Mr. C. A. Clark.
CODLIN	Mr. E. C. Linden.
SHORT	Mr. Hugh Webb.
GRINDER	Mr. T. Morton.
FRED TRENT	Mr. George Wareham.
GEORGE	Mr. Sidney Kearns.
KIT	Master Garnet Vayne.
QUILP'S BOY	Miss Aimee Vivash.
BILLY	Master John Sedger.
MAG	Miss Millie Searle.
NELL	Miss Isla Garnet-Vayne.
SALLY BRASS	Mrs. H. Gascoigne.
MRS. QUILP	Miss W nnie Ryan.
MRS. JARLEY	Miss Nellie Gilmore.
MRS. JINNIWIN	Miss Gwinnie Vayne.
THE MARCHIONESS	Miss Fay Garnet-Vayne.
MRS. GEORGE	Miss Nellie Clarence.
A VISITOR	Miss Winifred Wood.
MR. WITHERDEN	Mr. Surrey.

The great success of this production was the life-like Quilp of Mr. Ivan Berlyn. On April 20th the performances were repeated at the Crown, Peckham.

Much controversy has arisen from time to time over the right locale of "The Old Curiosity Shop," and though Dickens himself never definitely gave any direct information on the subject, tradition dies hard. As an interesting statement, I quote the following from the *Daily Telegraph* of May 16th, 1908 :—

"If this is not the 'Old Curiosity Shop,' where is it? This was a question put by Mr. William Hurst Flint, the auctioneer, in offering at the Mart yesterday the quaint tenement in Portsmouth Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, which bears on its plaster front the declaration that it was 'immortalised by Dickens.' Nobody answered the challenge, for in truth no one knows exactly what spot Dickens had in his mind's eye when, at Bath, he conceived the story of Little Nell and her grandfather. Mr. Flint himself hesitated to offer a definite opinion. 'According to many well-known authorities—I won't go further than that—this is the building.' But, whatever the real facts, the auctioneer maintained that sentiment gave the property a practical value. In the summer, he remarked, as people passed up and

down Portsmouth Street, they would see lines of chars-à-bancs laden with Americans. 'They come in hundreds, stand and stare at this beautiful old building, go in and purchase picture postcards and other printed matter, and when they get home say to their friends, 'Here is the Old Curiosity Shop of which you have read.'

"For a few moments Mr. Flint carried the company back to the days when lawyers were unknown in Lincoln's Inn Fields. He pictured the neighbourhood as dotted with the houses of the nobility, and the holders of aristocratic names as smoking their cigars in the cool of the evening as the cattle were driven off the mead, in the direction of a not too adjacent homestead. In all this, of course, there was a certain appropriateness, for there are those who say that the 'Old Curiosity Shop' was once nothing more nor less than a part of the dairy of the engaging Duchess of Portsmouth. Coming back to the particulars, the auctioneer spoke of the site as to-day being of value by reason of its nearness to the Law Courts, not to mention the Bankruptcy Court, and as having gained further importance owing to the opening of Kingsway."

The property was eventually sold privately, but it did not fetch a fancy price.

Mr. Charles W. Dickens, the grandson of the

famous novelist, declares that the Portsmouth Street shop Lincoln's Inn Fields was not the place at all, but one simply invented by Dickens. In the novel the shop is described as "a place which was one of those receptacles for old and curious things which seem to crouch in odd corners of this town, and to hide their musty treasures from the public eye in jealousy and distrust. There were suits of mail standing like ghosts in armour here and there, fantastic carvings brought from monkish cloisters, rusty weapons of various kinds, distorted figures in china and wood, and iron, and ivory; tapestry and strange furniture that might have been designed in dreams."

My own opinion is that Dickens did have some particular shop in his mind when he wrote the above description. Perhaps the shop that stood at the corner of Green Street, Leicester Square, where now stands the Garrick Restaurant, inspired him with the idea. I remembered the place well and the old fellow who kept it. In fact, it suggested an article to me which I wrote for the *Evening Standard* some years ago called "Curious Shops." In the book it will be recollected that Dickens tells how Kit would take his children to the street where his mistress had lived, but "new improvements had altered it so much, it was not

like the same. The old house had been long ago pulled down, and a fine broad road was in its place. . . . But he soon became uncertain of the spot, and could only say it was thereabouts, he thought, and that these alterations were confusing."

The statement that No. 14, Portsmouth Street, was the "Old Curiosity Shop"—there were two claimants, by the way, the other being on the opposite side of the thoroughfare, and both were duly labelled—for years attracted visitors from all parts of the world, and particularly from America, who have rapturously paid fancy sums to go over the premises and to be handed souvenirs of Little Nell. No assurance that the premises were not what they were said to be was of any consequence. "Well," they would say, "we have seen the place, and that's something."

The old premises anyhow had been many things in their time. An old fellow named Tesseyman, "Thackeray's bookbinder," once occupied them as a kind of curiosity shop, and dealt in all sorts of rubbish. He was well-known to Thackeray, Dickens, Douglas Jerrold, and other writers, who used to stop and gossip with him. He had strange and odd names for all these people, which were more pithy than polite. It may be that the legend

as to No. 14 being the real "Old Curiosity Shop" originated in Tesseyman's occupancy of the place. In a print of the period by Sargent, "Ye Old Curiosity Shop" certainly appears on the front of the house, but in another print of the same date it is absent. Since Tesseyman's time the premises as they stood in 1908 had been occupied as a ragshop, a furniture dealer's, and, last of all, as a waste-paper store. Another scrap of information used to be circulated to the effect that a waggish sign-writer who had to write up a name over the facia suggested that "The Old Curiosity Shop, immortalised by Dickens," should be written up over the front of the premises. This was agreed to, and this inventive piece of information remained to cause excitement and confusion.

Although the old gentleman who kept the curio shop at Green Street—his name was Samuels—was acquainted with Charles Dickens, who in all probability was an occasional customer, he could never throw any reliable light on the point as to whether his place was, or was not, the "Old Curiosity Shop" referred to by Dickens. The author of "David Copperfield" must have made many purchases at many curiosity shops in his time—London has ever been full of them—but reading the description of the journey of the old

Grandfather and Little Nell in chapter fifteen of the novel, I am strongly of opinion that it was somewhere off where the Whitechapel Road opens wide into the far country. Anyhow, neither the Green Street nor the Portsmouth Street houses have any claim to our consideration. It was doubtless a composite concoction of the writer's fancy founded on fleeting facts.

But I think Mr. Arthur S. Hearn settled the whole matter in the "Dickensian." He says: "A strong argument in an article appeared in the *Echo* during December, 1883, wherein the writer, Mr. Charles Tesseyman, says, 'My brother, who occupied No. 14, Portsmouth Street, between 1868 and 1877, the year of his decease, had the words "The Old Curiosity Shop," placed over the front for purely business purposes, as likely to attract custom to his shop. Before 1868 no suggestion had ever been made that the place was the veritable Old Curiosity Shop immortalised by Dickens.'"

This should settle the question once for all; and, if there is any desire to preserve any building absolutely associated with the name of the novelist, there is the house in Doughty Street, Bloomsbury, where he resided so long and did so much of his work.

CHAPTER X

"BARNABY RUDGE"

STRANGE to say references to the published bibliographies of the dramatisations of the books by Charles Dickens do not afford much reliable information. Not one that I have consulted is in any wise complete, and particularly is this evident in regard to "Barnaby Rudge," a story that from the very beginning, with the Lord George Gordon riots as a grand background, is, apart from "A Tale of Two Cities," the most dramatic of all the master's conceptions. Dickens tells us, in the Preface to "Barnaby Rudge," that as no proper account of the Gordon Riots had been introduced into any work of fiction he chose the subject as the basis of "Barnaby Rudge." All the outrages described are founded upon fact, and upon the information gathered from works and newspapers of the period in which the story is laid. Dolly Varden, Gabriel Varden, Barnaby, Joe Willet and Simon Tappertit

are all such natural characters that they are bound to appeal to us all. That rascal "Grip," the raven, a compound of several ravens that Dickens himself possessed, has long been historical like so many other rogues—of the human kind, which reminds me that the following letter may find a place here. It has reference to "Grip" and appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* :—

"Sir,

"I have noticed lately that mention is made of Dickens's favourite raven, 'Grip,' being the property of the late Sir Henry Irving. This statement is incorrect. 'Grip' was purchased at Christie, Manson, and Wood's rooms in 1870 by my husband, the late Lord Mayor Nottage. I have this raven now in its original case in my library, and it still has many of the old 'cuttings' from the newspapers of the day pasted on the back, though old and brown with age. I will merely quote one out of the number I have: 'Grip, of "Barnaby Rudge," was made a combat à outrance between Mr. Halliday and Mr. George Nottage. The bidding between these two gentlemen became thrillingly exciting. Mr. Halliday's last bid was £125, but on Mr. Nottage bidding 125 guineas, thus heading

his opponent by 30*s.*, the hammer fell, and he became the possessor of the raven.'

"Yours truly,

"M. C. NOTTAGE.

"Sidmouth House, 35, Collingham Road, South Kensington,
Nov. 24, 1906."

Mr. Alfred Tennyson Dickens, who only arrived in England at the end of September, 1910, after an absence in Australia of forty-five years, has come to travel through the land of his birth. He is giving a series of addresses, entitled, "My Father's Life and Work."

Incidentally he gave the following information. "The original of the raven in 'Barnaby Rudge,'" he said, "was one we kept at Tavistock House, not its successor which died at Gads Hill. The former bird, I remember, was an intelligent, though at the same time troublesome creature. He was an excellent linguist, and one of his favourite pastimes was to call up the coachman at the most inconvenient hours of the night. 'Tupping,' it would call, 'master wants the horses—master wants the carriage.' Tupping used to think the summons came from one of the maids, and one night he actually got the horses into the carriage before discovering the deception."

The first drama on the subject was prepared by Charles Selby and Charles Melville, and produced

as "Barnaby Rudge" at the English Opera House (the Lyceum Theatre), June 28th, 1841.

Mr. Geoffry Haredale (*An English gentleman*)	Mr. Robson.
Mr. Chester (*an old man of the world*) ..	Mr. Selby.
Edward Chester (*his son*)	Mr. Green.
Peaker (*valet to Mr. Chester*)	Mr. Moore.
John Willet (*Landlord of "The Maypole."*)	Mr. Turnour.
Joe Willet (*his son*)	Mr. T. Green.
Solomon Daisy (*a sexton*)	Mr. Thompson.
Phil Parkes (*an exciseman*)	Mr. King.
Tom Cobb (*a postman*)	Mr. Flemming.
Gabriel Varden (*a locksmith*)	Mr. Granby.
Black Hugh (*an ostler*)	Mr. S. Smith.
Simon Tappertit (*an apprentice*).. ..	Mr. Searle.
Barnaby Rudge	Miss Fortescue.
The Stranger	Mr. Salter.
Mrs. Varden	Mrs. Granby.
Miggs (*her maid and confidante*).. ..	Mrs. Harris.
Dolly Varden	Miss Fitzjames.
Miss Haredale	Miss Granby.
Mrs. Rudge	Mrs. Selby.

The Mr. Robson named was not the great little Robson—and yet, I have often wondered, because there was a Robson at St. James's Theatre in 1839, and it was in this year that the Robson began to distinguish himself at the Grecian. There is no authentic life of Frederick Robson in existence, although many scribes have tried, including John Hollingshead, and E. L. Blanchard, to patch his eccentric wanderings together. Anyhow 1841 was

about the Robson's time, of uncertain dates in his meteoric flights between London and Dublin, and it seems odd that there should have been two Robsons about just then. This Mr. Robson, anyhow, took the part of Geoffrey Haredale in the Lyceum production. By the way, a well-known comedian, Mat Robson, did not make his London appearance until October 14th, 1867, when he played "Buffles" in the "Two Puddifoots," at the Olympic Theatre. He died December 22nd, 1899. In the "Era Almanack" for 1871, Frederick Robson's West End début is given as April 17th, 1865, in "Ulysses," at the St. James's Theatre. That, of course, is sheer nonsense. Robson left the Grecian Saloon and "Bravo Rouse" in 1849. Went to Dublin for a short season and made his first West End bow at the Olympic Theatre under the elder Farren in 1853. And then began his magnetic but brief career. He remained at the Olympic until 1864, the year of his death.

Miss Fortescue, who later became Lady Gardner, undertook the title *rôle*, and pleased Charles Dickens very much indeed. Macready was greatly impressed by Miss Fortescue's Barnaby, and said of the performance in his Diary, under date, July 7th, 1841, "I went to the English Opera House, and saw a piece on 'Barnaby Rudge,' Miss Fortescue acting the part with great vivacity and power."

In the following December another dramatisation was given at the Adelphi under Frederick Yates's management from Edward Stirling's preparation; and, of course, at the Strand, notwithstanding Moncrieff's marvellous manifesto, one by his manipulation and direction in the previous August. Mr. Thomas Higgie had also been busy for the Victoria, and although I can find no definite trace, George Almar for the Surrey—though they are referred to, without exact dates, by various writers.

To show to what subterfuges and excuses the pirates of times gone by would descend, it is provident to quote the following: "Some London publisher about this time, having issued imitations of Dickens's former works and titles, Thomas Hood, writing to the *Athenæum*, June, 1842, on 'Copyright and Copywrong,' speaks of a conversation he had with a bookseller on a spurious "Master Humphrey's Clock" (in which both the "Old Curiosity Shop" and "Barnaby Rudge" first appeared). "Sir," said the bookseller, "if you had observed the name, it is *Bos*, not *Boz*—s, sir, is not z; and, besides, it would have been no piracy, sir, even with the z, because 'Master Humphrey's Clock,' you see, sir, was not published by Boz, but by Charles Dickens."

At the Adelphi Theatre, December 20th, 1841, the cast of "Barnaby Rudge" was as follows:—

Barnaby Rudge	.. ..	Miss Chaplin.
John Willet ..	.. ..	Mr. Wilkinson.
Gabriel Varden	.. ..	Mr. Paul Bedford.
Maypole Hugh	.. ..	Mr. O. Smith.
Simon Tappertit	.. ..	Mr. Edward Wright.

Sir John Chester and Miggs were at first doubled by Frederick Yates, but after a few weeks he resigned Miggs to Miss Chester and Sir John Chester to Mr. Cullenford. Yates, of course, was the lessee and manager of the theatre. Mrs. Yates was the Dolly Varden. *The Era* said of this production: "This is, we believe, the fourth dramatic version, but this adapter had the advantage of referring to the completed work. The present adaptation is wanting in consecutiveness." The piece was much applauded during its progress, and continued in the bill for some time.

On November 12th, 1866, another "Barnaby Rudge" was put on at the Princess's Theatre by Messrs. H. Vining and Watts Phillips, as a four-act drama.

BARNABY RUDGE.

Barnaby Rudge	.. ..	Miss Katharine Rogers.
Maypole Hugh	.. ..	Mr. Charles Horsman.
Simon Tappertit	.. ..	Mr. Stanislaus Calhaem.
Joe Willet ..	.. ..	Mr. C. H. Fenton.
Sir John Chester	.. ..	Mr. J. G. Shore.
Mr. Haredale ..	.. ..	Mr. Henry Forrester.
The Stranger ..	.. ..	Mr. Frederick Villiers.
Gabriel Varden	.. ..	Mr. E. Shepherd.
John Willet ..	.. ..	Mr. H. Mellon.
Tom Cobb ..	.. ..	Mr. W. R. Robins.

PARKES	Mr. R. Chapman.
MRS. VARDEN	Mrs. Horsman.
MIGGS	Mrs. John Wood.
MRS. RUDGE	Mrs. H. Vining.
DOLLY VARDEN	Miss A. Thomson.

Mrs. John Wood was a daughter of Henry Vining, and Clement Scott says, speaking of the piece, which had a terrible slating in the *Times*, while dreadful things were said of Mrs. Wood, "This was most probably produced to introduce Mrs. John Wood to the London Stage. She was for some time a member of the Theatre Royal, Manchester, when she married John Wood, the comedian, and accompanied him to America in 1854. Made her *début* there in September, at the New Boston Theatre. Five years later she was manageress of the American Theatre, San Francisco, and returning to New York, became an immense favourite." Of the Princess's Theatre a newspaper critic, speaking of Mrs. Wood's performance, observed: "If any one expected the subdued cough, the spasmodic start, and the constant rubbing and tweaking of the nose to which Miss Miggs had recourse in the frequent moments of her vexation, would have been reproduced by Mrs. John Wood in illustration of the novelist's description, they must have overlooked the peculiarities of that liberty-loving country from which the débutante has just come after a sojourn of some

twelve years. . . . The Miss Miggs who appeared last evening on the stage of the Princess's is a 'Yankee girl' of the familiar down East pattern, who sings one of the high-toned ditties characteristic of her class, mixes up grotesque pantomime extravagances with nasal inflections and angular attitudes, and thinks nothing of sprawling on tables and tumbling into tubs." The piece was a failure, and then George Honey played the part, which ran until January. If one comes to think of it, Miss Miggs might have been a restrained hoyden—especially after her remarks to Mrs. Varden, when she desires to be reinstated, when the Gordon rioters had been dispersed.

"Barnaby Rudge" was licensed for the East Opera House, June 30th, 1841. This was called a musical entertainment. The possibilities of "Barnaby Rudge" for operatic treatment have not been overlooked, but up to the present no piece of any pretensions has taken the public fancy, though several have been done, one, some years ago, at the Opera Comique, which did not catch on.

Another dramatisation was :

BARNABY RUDGE;

or THE MURDER AT THE WARREN.

A Drama in Three Acts, adapted from Dickens' celebrated work, by Thomas Higgie.

MR. GEOFFREY HAREDALE ... Mr. Fitzroy.
MR. CHESTER .. .. .. Mr. Higgie.

Edward Chester	Mr. W. H. Sterling.
The Stranger	Mr. Chamberlain.
Barnaby Rudge	Mrs. Traylett
Gabriel Varden	Mr. Tilbury.
Simon Tappertit	Mr. W. H. Widdicomb.
John Willet	Mr. Gordon.
Joe Willet	Mr. Davis
Maypole Hugh	Mr. Craven.
Solomon Daisy	Mr. Rogers.
Short Tom Cobb	Mr. Kimber.
Long Phil Parks	Mr. Richardson.
Mrs. Rudge	Mrs. Gordon.
Emma Haredale	Miss Brown.
Mrs. Varden	Mrs. Higgie.
Miggs	Miss Plunkett.
Dolly Varden	Mrs. R. M. Raymond.
Peaker	Mr. Doughty.

Villagers: Misses Gordon, Cuthbert, Bloomfield, etc.

I have not been able to discover when or where this play was produced. Thomas Hailes Lacy was the owner of the copyright, and there is the British Museum date stamp, June 5th, 1856. From the names in the cast, however, I think it must have been done at the old Strand Theatre or the Surrey.

At the Surrey Theatre, October 5th, 1872, a version called "Dolly Varden," by G. Murray Wood, was performed for the first time in London.

Edward Chester	Mr. H. T. Tempest.
Gabriel Varden	Mr. S. Reed.
Sir John Chester	Mr. Henry Lee.
Geoffrey Haredale	Mr. Charles Cecil.
Solomon Daisy	Mr. H. Jaye.
John Willet	Mr. W. Stacey.

SCENE FROM "BARNABY RUDGE: OR THE MURDER AT THE WARREN," BY THOMAS HIGGIE.

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JOE WILLET	Mr. Clarke Nicholson.
SIMON TAPPERTIT	Mr. Harry Cornwall.
THE STRANGER	Mr. W. F. Gresham.
DOLLY VARDEN and MISS MIGGS	Miss Virginia Blackwood.
MRS. VARDEN	Mrs. A. H. Lacey.
MRS. RUDGE	Miss Blanche Marlborough.
EMMA HAREDALE	Miss Eversfield.
BARNABY RUDGE	Miss Rachel Mellor.

Miss Blackwood later took her company—she was lessee and directress of the Surrey Theatre from October, 1872, until June, 1873—with various plays from Dickens by her husband, G. Murray Wood, including "The Old Curiosity Shop" ("Little Nelly") and "Little Em'ly'" to the Park Theatre, Camden Town, to Astley's and the Royal Aquarium Theatre, Westminster, after much touring, in 1876, 1877, 1878, and 1880.

The "Dolly Varden," at the Surrey, by G. Murray Wood, was first tried at Bradford in April, 1872, by the way, and was done again at Astley's April 30th, 1878. The cast at the latter house is worth quoting, as it contains the names of many well-known players.

MR. CHESTER (*a Gentleman past the prime of life, a bit of a beau, a perfect man of the world*)	Mr. H. Such Granville.
EDWARD CHESTER (*a gallant young gentleman, his son, in love with Emma Haredale*)	Mr. F. Bathurst.
MR. GEOFFREY HAREDALE (*owner of The Warren*)	Mr. Edward Chamberlaine.

THE STRANGER	Mr. R. H. Lingham.
BARNABY RUDGE (*an idiot boy*)	Miss Emilie Blackwood.
GABRIEL VARDEN (*the locksmith of Clerkenwell, noted for good living, good sleeping, good humour, and good health*) ..	Mr. S. Reid.
SIMON TAPPERTIT (*the locksmith's 'prentice, a youth with a large body and a small soul*) ..	Mr. H. Cornwall.
JOHN WILLET (*mine host of the "Maypole"—slow and sure*)	Mr. H. Williams.
JOE WILLET (*his son, a lad of promise, with a sneaking-affection for Dolly Varden*)	Mr. Frank Cates.
MAYPOLE HUGH (*a bit of a gipsy and a bit of a poacher, ostler to Joe Willet*)	Mr. J. W. Robertson.
SOLOMON DAISY (*Parish Clerk and Bellringer of Chigwell*)	Mr. J. B. Johnstone.
TOM COBB	Mr. H. Crichton.
THE WARDER	Mr. P. Anstead.
MRS. RUDGE (*a widow, mother of Barnaby*)	Miss Blanche Marlborough.
EMMA HAREDALE (*in love with Edward Chester*)	Miss E. Pyne.
MRS. VARDEN (*plump and buxom—the grey mare and the better horse*)	Miss Fanny Wright.
MIGGS (*her Maid, shrewish, with great affection for herself, and a great contempt for the men fellows*)	Miss Virginia Blackwood.
DOLLY VARDEN (*the locksmith's daughter*)	Miss Virginia Blackwood

Miss Blackwood was fond of "doubling" in

Dickens, and the only piece of his that she played without doing so that I can recollect was "The Message from the Sea," in which she contented herself with Mog.

At the Marylebone Theatre, November 4th, 1876, a new version of "Barnaby Rudge" was done, and as Mr. Joseph Arnold Cave was the proprietor of the theatre at that time, and the author of several popular plays, including "The Old Toll House," it is just possible that he had a hand in the construction of it.

A comedy opera entitled "Dolly Varden; or, the Riots of '80," in two acts, written and composed by E. Cympson, was produced at the Brighton Aquarium, November 4th, 1889. Mr. Walter Dexter, who is an ardent Dickensian, and who has more than once dramatised Dickens's novels, tried his hand very successfully on "Barnaby Rudge," with the result that "Dolly Varden," a comedy in three acts, was presented at the King's Theatre, Hammersmith, on December 16th, 1907, and other suburban theatres during the week. The piece was well done, and as it is quite new, it will doubtless be heard of again.

By the way, there was a comic opera from America presented at the Avenue Theatre on October 1st, 1903, chiefly remarkable for the clever

acting, singing and dancing of Miss Mabelle Gilman. It was called "Dolly Varden," which was a libel on Dickens's creation, as it had nothing to do with "Barnaby Rudge" at all, and was simply an exceedingly bad (musical) version of Wycherley's old comedy "The Country Girl." So that may at once go by the board.

Mr. Charles Dillon, the one-time celebrated actor, provided a "Barnaby Rudge" for the Olympic Theatre, with himself in the title *rôle*, according to "Oxberry's Budget of Plays," published 1844. Apparently the piece was also done at the Queen's Theatre, Tottenham Street, about the same time, but I have not been able to discover the year of production. The only other names recognisable in the two casts are H. Widdicomb, Wilkins, Manders, and Harwood; Mrs. Campbell, Mrs. J. Parry, and Miss Wrightson. "Charles Dillon, Comedian," is credited with three other plays in the same volume, but the stage dates are absent, and I have searched authorities in vain.

CHAPTER XI

"MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT"

ACCORDING to Dickens himself the real origin of the novel "Martin Chuzzlewit" was the character of Pecksniff, which he had seen much of in many forms—the absolute and slimy humbug. This is how the author succinctly put it: "My real object was to show how selfishness propagates itself; and to what a grim giant it may grow from small beginnings." The Betsey Prig and Sarah Gamp creatures really were in existence not only in the days when "Martin Chuzzlewit" was challenging criticism on both sides of the Atlantic, but until quite recent years. And perhaps, here and there, in country villages, even now. Who knows? I have met many of them. The book itself was dedicated to Miss Burdett Coutts—afterwards created the Baroness Burdett Coutts, one of the most generous and gracious women that ever lived.

"To Miss Burdett Coutts, This Tale is Dedicated with the True and Earnest Regard of the Author."

At first the work was a comparative failure, but afterwards it " picked up " and became a favourite. Mrs. Gamp was absolutely drawn from life—from nurses who in those days—when the trained nurse was unknown—attended both rich and poor, and came from the same miserable, irresponsible class, born of ignorance and neglect.

With the production of " Martin Chuzzlewit," Dickens, by an arrangement with Messrs. Harper Brothers, was enabled to forestall the American pirates, and through some understanding with various theatrical managers, to prevent, except in the minor houses, his stories from being unduly tampered with. In 1844 there were four productions of " Martin Chuzzlewit " at the following theatres: the Lyceum, July 8, by Edward Stirling, of which more presently; at the Strand, July 15; at the Victoria, same date; at the Queen's, July 29. This Queen's was known for long as the Dusthole, and upon its site many playhouses phœnixized themselves, the last and most glorious of all being the Prince of Wales's, Tottenham Street, Tottenham Court Road, where Sir Squire and Lady Bancroft made their fame and fortune, and that of T. W. Robertson the dramatist as well. The handsome Scala now stands on the site. Thomas Higgie and Thomas Hailes Lacy, sometime actor, author,

and publisher, as we have already seen, appear, according to the play issued by the latter, to have been the propagators of the piece done at the three theatres named after the Lyceum. To be candid, it looks as though somebody had got hold of the day bills and shot them into the printed play, "just for the fun of the thing," for they by no means "speak by the card." Let me explain: In the book published by Thomas Hailes Lacy—"Martin Chuzzlewit; or, His Wills and His Ways, and What He Did and What He Didn't," four casts are given:—Lyceum (which is incorrect, and the play is quite different from Stirling's), Strand, Victoria, Queen's. In fact, the whole thing is a grotesque muddle. Thomas Higgie died March 24th, 1893, at the age of 85.

At the Lyceum the cast was very strong in names which must be quite familiar, even in these days. I give a copy of the programme:—

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT.

A Drama in Three Acts, adapted from C. Dickens, Esq., celebrated work by Edward Stirling, Esq.

First produced at the Lyceum Theatre, July 8th, 1844.

Old Martin Chuzzlewit ..	Mr. R. Younge.
Young Martin Chuzzlewit ..	Mr. F. Vining.
Mr. Jonas Chuzzlewit ..	Mr. Emery.
Mr. Pecksniff	Mr. F. Matthews.
Mr. Montague Tigg	Mr. A. Wigan.

Tom Pinch	Mr. Meadows.
Lewsome	Mr. Staunton.
John Westlock	Mr. Kinloch.
Mark Tapley	Mr. Sanders.
Mr. Nadget	Mr. Turner.
Mr. Jenkins	Mr. Yarnold.
Mr. Mobble	Mr. Clifton.
Mr. Gander	Mr. Freeborn.
Mr. Wilson	Mr. King.
Master Bailey	Mrs. Keeley.
Bullamy	Mr. Andrews.
Mary Graham	Miss Fortescue.
Mercy	Miss Woolgar.
Charity	Mrs. A. Wigan.
Ruth Pinch	Miss Groves.
Mrs. Lupin	Mrs. Usher.
Mrs. Todgers	Mrs. Woolidge.
Betsey Prigg (*sic*)	Mr. J. W. Collier.
Mrs. Sairey Gamp	Mr. Keeley.
Mrs. Harris (*her friend*)—*a fiction*	by Nobody.

Passengers, Bill-stickers, Newsvendors, Porters, Cabmen, Watermen—by Everybody and Everything.

Betsey Prig and Sairey Gamp were, as will be seen, acted by men. Keeley made his character very droll and amusing.

At the Victoria, Messrs. J. Dale, Osbaldiston, Maynard, Seaman, and J. Vining; Miss Vincent, Mrs. Garrick, Mrs. G. Lee, Miss Hamilton, and Mr. J. Herbert as Mrs. Gamp played. I give the Strand cast later. Charles Webb did a play at this time, the production of which I have not satisfactorily traced.

However, I can furnish the Queen's Theatre cast:

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT.

Pecksniff	Mr. Royer.
Antony	Mr. Johnson.
Jonas	Mr. C. Williams.
Martin Chuzzlewit	Mr. Norton.
Tom Pinch	Mr. J. Reynolds.
Mark Tapley	Mr. Gray.
Montagu Tigg	Mr. J. Parry.
Chuffey	Mr. Edwards.
Bailey, Junr.	Miss Wrighten.
Mrs. Gamp	Mr. Manders.
Mary Graham	Miss Stoker.
Charity	Miss Gough.
Mercy	Miss Rogers.
Mrs. Lupin	Mrs. Manders.

From Sairey Gamp, it may be mentioned here, we get one of our names for the homely "brolly," which in France is known as a Robinson on account of Crusoe's gamp of that family.

To resume. Charles Dickens superintended at least one rehearsal of the Lyceum production, and he wrote to Keeley on June 24th, 1844:—

"I cannot, consistently with the opinion I hold and always have held in reference to the principle of adapting novels for the stage, give you a prologue to Chuzzlewit. But, believe me to be quite sincere in saying that if I felt I could reasonably do such a thing for any one, I could do it for you.

"I start for Italy on Monday, but if you have the piece on the stage, and rehearse on Friday, I will gladly come down at any time you may appoint on that morning, and go through it with you all. . . . I presume Mrs. Keeley will do Ruth Pinch. If so, I feel sure about her, and of your Mrs. Gamp I am certain, but a queer sensation begins in my legs, and comes up to my forehead when I think of Tom Pinch."

As it happened, Miss Groves played Ruth Pinch very well, but neither she nor Tom, which was acted by the capable Mr. Drinkwater Meadows, was made so important in the stage production as evidently Dickens had anticipated.

A short piece was "Mrs. Sarah Gamp's Tea and Turn Out," a Bozzian sketch in one act by B. Webster, Esq.

First performed at the Theatre Royal, Adelphi, on Monday, October 26th, 1846.

Mr. Magnus Muff	.. ..	Mr. Cullenford.
Charley Muff	.. ..	Mr. Worrell.
Patrick Moriarty	.. ..	Mr. Redmond Ryan.
Mrs. Sarah Gamp	.. ..	Mr. Wright.
Mrs. Betsey Prig	.. ..	Mr. Munyard.
Selina Gamp ..	.. ..	Miss Ellen Chaplin.
Mrs. Moriarty	.. ..	Miss M. Taylor.

At the Olympic Theatre on March 2nd, 1868, "Martin Chuzzlewit: A Drama," by Horace Wigan,

SCENE FROM "MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT," AT THE OLYMPIC THEATRE, 1868.

[*To face p.* 178.

was put on, with the undermentioned dramatis personæ :

MARTIN CHUZZLEWIT.

Martin Chuzzlewit	Mr. H. Vaughan.
Antony	Mr. John Maclean.
Jonas	Mr. Horace Wigan.
Pecksniff	Mr. Addison.
Tom Pinch	Mr. J. G. Taylor.
Mark Tapley	Mr. R. Soutar.
Montague Tigg	Mr. G. Vincent.
Bailey Junr.	Miss Nellie Farren.
Mrs. Gamp	Mr. John Clarke.
Mary Graham	Miss Louisa Moore.
Charity	Miss D'Este.
Mercy	Mrs. Lennox Grey.
Mrs. Lupin	Miss Lewis.
Mrs. Todgers	Mrs. Caulfield.

This was the first time John Clarke played Mrs. Gamp—a part that he was able to make almost his own later, particularly in a sketch called "Sairey Gamp," with C. J. Smith as Betsey Prig, Adelphi, March 22nd, 1873, with J. B. Buckstone's, "Jack Sheppard." The late lamented and lovable "Lal" Brough was also a capital Mrs. Gamp.

In 1878 Mr. Harry Simms, who had quite an infatuation for Dickens as appealing to him for the drama, did an adaptation for the Theatre Royal, Oxford, on the Easter Monday of that year. I believe, although it did not come to London, it made some progress in the country.

We now come to "Tom Pinch," in three acts, by Joseph J. Dilley and Lewis Clifton. On the first night's programme of the production, March 10, 1881, at the Vaudeville Theatre, there was a note to this effect: "The Authors think it desirable to state that they have not attempted to dramatise the novel of 'Martin Chuzzlewit.' They have simply taken one thread of the story, and have converted that into an acting play, making alterations in incident and dialogue only where they have been found necessary, or for the sake of Dramatic effect." The cast was very strong, and the piece was a considerable success, though one critic—the satiric *Punch*—was rather sarcastic. "Those who have seen 'Tom Pinch' at the Vaudeville will readily understand why, as a rule, the late Charles Dickens so strongly objected to the dramatisation of his works. The piece now playing under this title might just as well have been called 'Tom Anybody'—say Tom 'All-Alone.' The stage is said to hold up the mirror to Nature; in this case the glass used has been of rather inferior quality. The result is a somewhat distorted reflection of an episode in 'Martin Chuzzlewit.' Mr. Tom Thorne appears in the bills as Mr. Tom Pinch, but, in spite of a wig of very peculiar construction, his identity is not at all the real article, but Pinch-beck. The Pecksniff

of Mr. William Farren is sketchily suggestive of Sir Peter Teazle in modern costume; and the representatives of Cherry and Merry conscientiously preserve that reputation for burlesque which the Vaudeville enjoyed in the early days of its management." Now there are no characters in the play called "Cherry and Merry." *Punch* purposely so perverted Charity and Mercy, and these parts were most admirably acted by two exceptionally clever actresses, Miss Sophie Larkin and Miss Cicely Richards. So were Mary Graham by Miss Kate Bishop, and Ruth Pinch by Miss Lydia Cowell. Tom Thorne was very highly praised by Clement Scott, as Tom Pinch, and he was about the best dramatic critic London has had for many years. The Editor of *Punch* at the time was F. C. Burnand (just appointed), whose wretchedly bad play "Ourselves" was damned out of hand at the Vaudeville Theatre, Thursday, January 29, 1880. I know, because I was present. Sir F. C. (then Mr.) Burnand was very sore about the failure of his piece "Ourselves," and so he wrote his own defence of it in the *Theatre Magazine* for March, 1880.

Here is the Vaudeville cast of "Tom Pinch."

Pecksniff	Mr. William Farren.
Tom Pinch	Mr. Thomas Thorne.
Old Martin	Mr. John MacLean.
Martin Chuzzlewit	Mr. J. G. Grahame.

John Westlock	Mr. J. R. Crauford.
Mark Tapley	Mr. W. Lestocq.
Mary Graham	Miss Kate Bishop.
Charity	Miss Sophie Larkin.
Mercy	Miss Cicely Richards.
Ruth	Miss Lydia Cowell.
Jane	Miss E. Palmer.

Mr. E. S. Willard thought so highly of "Tom Pinch" that he secured it for his repertoire, and has played the title *rôle* all over the world, and particularly throughout the length and breadth of America. During his season at the St. James's Theatre in 1903, Mr. Willard revived the piece with gratifying results.

Other pieces founded on "Martin Chuzzlewit" were "Mrs. Gamp's Party," done at Manchester, "Mrs. Harris," a farce by E. Stirling, presented at the Strand Theatre, with John Clarke as Sairey Gamp, while in 1844 a drama was given with the full title of the novel, in which an eccentric actor named Hall doubled the parts of Pecksniff and Sairey Gamp.

In 1864 was played and published in Germany "Tartuffe Junior, Oder Martin Geldermann und Seine Erben:" Lutspiel in funf Aufzügen. Von H. Chr. L. Klein. (Play in five acts after "The Life of Martin Chuzzlewit.")

To Edward Stirling's Lyceum adaptation of

"Martin Chuzzlewit," Albert Smith wrote a short prologue, which is worth preserving:

> We owe this story of the present hour
> To that great master hand whose magic power
> Can call up laughter, bid the tear to start,
> And find an echoing chord in every heart;
> Whom we have learn'd to deem a household friend;
> Who midst his various writings never penn'd
> One line that might his guileless pages spot
> One word that dying he would wish to blot.

There was also published a five-act comedy in verse founded on "Martin Chuzzlewit," but, I believe, never performed.

Speaking of the Strand Theatre in 1847, Edmund Yates says, "My first visit to the Strand was in my very early days, when it was called Punch's Playhouse, and the Keeleys were acting there; but beyond those facts I have no recollection of it. What I first clearly remember in connection with the little theatre is a dramatic version of 'Martin Chuzzlewit,' with a clever, jolly-looking man named H. Hall, who doubled the characters of Pecksniff and Mrs. Gamp, and one Roberts, who made an excellent Tigg." I can now add to this—the date of the production was July 15, 1844. In the company playing the various other parts were Messrs. Ayliffe (Old Martin Chuzzlewit), W. Searle (Anthony Chuzzlewit), Attwood and Ranoe (Jonas and

Martin Chuzzlewit the nephews), Conway (Chuffy), Cockrill (Bailey), Nadgett a detective, Thompson, while the ladies were: Miss Fitzjames as Mercy, Mrs. C. Melville as Charity, and Mrs. Smythe as Mrs. Lupin. After a while Mercy was taken by Mrs. Montgomery.

In 1904 there was published a very interesting comedy in five acts, entitled "Mr. Pecksniff's Pupil," by Miss I. M. Pagan, which no doubt, in due course will face the footlights.

The same writer has also written "Town and Todgers," a sketch in two scenes from "Martin Chuzzlewit."

Evidently based upon Charles Dickens's "American Notes," Edward Stirling contrived a farce for the Adelphi Theatre, entitled, "Yankee Notes for English Circulation," which was produced by Benjamin Webster, January, 1843. It did not make any impression, however, and was soon withdrawn.

CHAPTER XII

THE CHRISTMAS BOOKS

THERE is no doubt that when Dickens conceived the idea of "A Christmas Carol," the first of the long and happy series of Yule Tide tales, which at once caught the public taste and thrilled so many hearts with peace and goodwill to all men, he brought into vogue the Christmas story proper, if, indeed, he were not the actual pioneer of it. "A Christmas Carol" anyhow marked an epoch in the history of light and homely fiction and carried charity and happiness to many a fireside. It was in October, 1843, that the conception of his memorable Christmas Carol occurred to Dickens during a brief visit to Manchester, and by the end of November the whole work was finished in London. The author said that he "excited himself in a most extraordinary manner in the composition," and declared that he was alternately "laughing and crying over it." He explains how he walked about the back streets of London, fifteen and twenty miles, many a night when all other folks had gone to bed. Thackeray, ever an enthusiastic

admirer of his great contemporary—to say rival would be absurd, their genius was equally marvellous in different ways—wrote in *Fraser's Magazine*, "Who can listen to objections regarding such a book as this? It seems to me a national benefit, and to every man or woman who reads it a personal kindness. The last two people I heard speak of it were women; neither knew the other, or the author, and both said by way of criticism, 'God bless him!' What a feeling it is for a writer to be able to inspire such thoughts, and what a reward to reap." Lord Jeffrey, in a letter equally enthusiastic, wrote to the author: "You should be happy yourself, for you may be sure you have done good by this publication, fostered more kindly feelings and prompted more positive acts of beneficence than can be traced to all the pulpits and confessionals in Christendom since Christmas, 1842."

One of the first stage versions of "The Carol" was from that adept adapter of Dickens and Harrison Ainsworth and others, the ubiquitous Edward Stirling.

At the Theatre Royal Adelphi, then under the management of Thomas Gladstane, February 4th, 1844, was produced the "Christmas Carol" and the playbills announced that it was "the only dramatic version sanctioned by C. Dickens, Esqre." The piece

was "dramatised and produced by Mr. Edward Stirling." Evidently Dickens had overlooked some of Mr. Stirling's peccadilloes.

And here is the cast.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

STAVE THE FIRST—THE FIRST OF THE THREE SPIRITS.

EBENEZER SCROOGE (*the money lender—A Christmas hater—A name only* GOOD *upon 'Change*)	Mr. O. Smith.
MISTER BOB CRATCHIT (*a Poor Clerk with Fifteen Shillings a week and Six Children*) ..	Mr. Wright.
MR. FEZZIWIG (*a London Trader — "one vast substantial smile" only, rich and jovial*)	Mr. S. Smith.
MR. DILWORTH (*a Pedagogue*) ..	Mr. Johnson.
MASTER SCROOGE (*a School Boy*)	Master Lightfoot.
YOUNG SCROOGE and DICK WILKINS (*Fellow Apprentices*) ..	Mr. Braid and Mr. Leslie
POST BOY..	Mr. Honey.
THE DIRTY LITTLE BOY FROM OVER THE WAY	Master Mouncer.
FIDDLER	Mr. Shaw.
MRS. FEZZIWIG (*Beaming and Loveable*)	Mrs. Woollidge.
BELLA MORTON (*Scrooge's first, his only love, save gold*) ..	Miss Woolgar.
THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS (*it was a Strange Figure — like a Child*)	Miss E. Chaplain.
LITTLE FAN (*Scrooge's Sister*) ..	Miss Mott.

MARY, the Tenant—SALLY, the Cook—their Friends, Neighbours, etc.

STAVE THE SECOND—THE SECOND OF THE THREE SPIRITS.

SCROOGE (*the miser*)	Mr. O. Smith.
NEPHEW FRED	Mr. Maynard.
BOB CRATCHIT	Mr. Wright.
MASTER PETER CRATCHIT ..	Master Brunton.
MASTER TOM CRATCHIT ..	Master Scott.
SEA CAPTAIN	Mr. Jones.
TINY TIM (*"Alas! poor Tiny Tim—he bore a little crutch, and had his limbs supported by an iron frame"*)	Miss Maynard.
VISION OF DOOM (*Ignorance*) ..	Mr. Crane
WANT	Mr. Holmes.
MARINERS	Messrs. Rough and Rains.

Butchers, Grocers, Ballad Singers, Passengers, Watermen, Small Purchasers, Visitors, etc.

MRS. BOB CRATCHIT (*wife to Bob —dressed out but poorly in a twice-turned gown, but brave in ribbons*)	Mrs. F. Matthews.
MARTHA CRATCHIT	Miss Lee.
BELINDA CRATCHIT	Miss O. Hicks.
SALLY CRATCHIT	Miss Johnson.
THE GHOST OF CHRISTMAS PRESENT (*with a Song, "A Jolly Giant Glorious to see"*) ...	Mr. Forman.

STAVE THE THIRD—THE LAST OF THE SPIRITS.

SCROOGE (*the miser*)	Mr. O. Smith.
NEPHEW FRED	Mr. Maynard.
BOB CRATCHIT	Mr. Wright.
MASTER PETER CRATCHIT ..	Master Brunton.
TINY TIM	Miss Maynard.
OLD JOE (*a Receiver of Stolen Goods—a grey-haired rascal nearly seventy years of age*)	Mr. Sanders.

SCENE FROM "A CHRISTMAS CAROL," AT THE ADELPHI THEATRE, 1844.

[*To face p.* 188.

MR. TOPPER and MR. FLOSS (*Worldly Friends of Old Scrooge*)	Mr. Aldridge and Mr. Freeborn.
MR. BLINK (*an Undertaker's Man*)..	Mr. Honey.
Visitors, Guests, etc.	
MRS. DIBLER (*a Laundress*)	Mrs. Woollidge.
MRS FORD	Miss Butler.
SALBY (*a nurse*)	Miss Wilshire.
MRS. BOB CRATCHIT	Mrs. F. Matthews.
MARTHA CRATCHIT	Miss Lee.
SPIRIT OF THE FUTURE (*a solemn Phantom, dressed and hooded coming like a Mist along the ground*)	Mrs. D. Lee.

A full reproduction of this playbill, a promise in itself of a good piece and an appetising entertainment will be found on another page. Of this performance Dickens wrote to John Forster, "I saw the 'Carol' last night. Better than usual, and Wright seems to enjoy Bob Cratchit, but *heart-rending* to me. Oh! Heaven, if any forecast of *this* was ever in my mind! Yet O. Smith was drearily better than I expected. It is a great comfort to have that kind of meat underdone, and his face is quite perfect."

This letter seems somewhat contradictory in view of the following statement made by T. Edgar Pemberton: "The pleasantest thing which Mr. Stirling has to tell with regard to his connection

with Dickens is concerning his dramatisation of the 'Christmas Carol,' which was done by the express sanction of the author. The story is in itself so cheering and is so daintily told, that Mr. Stirling's own words must be used." Here is what Mr. Stirling recorded: "Dickens attended several rehearsals, furnishing valuable suggestions. Thinking to make Tiny Tim (a pretty child) more effective, I ordered a set of irons and bandages for his supposed weak leg. When Dickens saw this tried on the child, he took me aside: 'No, Stirling, no; this won't do! remember how painful it would be to many of the audience having crippled children.'"

Master Brunton, who played Peter, made a name for himself, and was the father of the clever comedian Walter E. Brunton, so long with J. L. Toole.

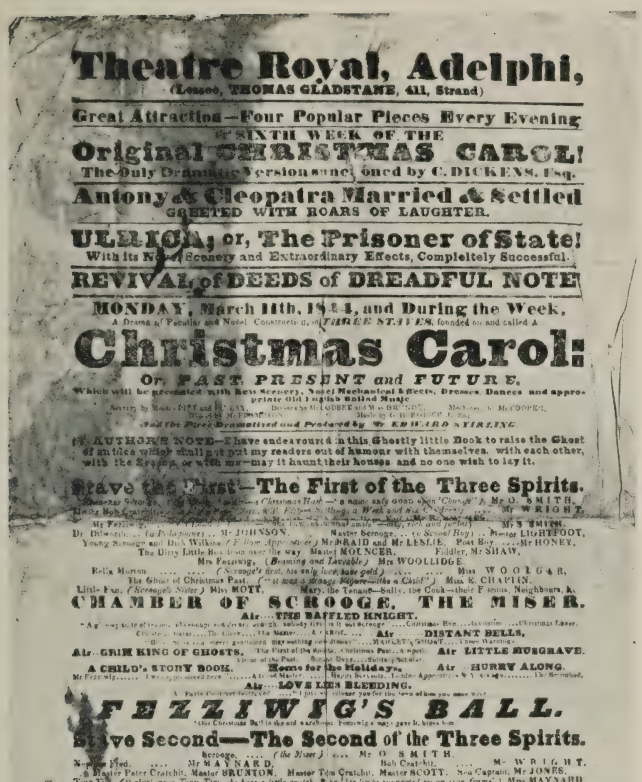
The "Carol" was done at the Strand and also at the Surrey. At the latter house on February 5th, 1844.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL.

EBENEZER SCROOGE (*the miser*)	Mr. R. Honner.
FRANK FREEHEART (*his nephew*)	Mr. J. T. Johnson.
MR. CHEERLY	Mr. Hawkins.
MR. HEARTLY	Mr. Green.
BOB CRATCHIT (*Scrooge's clerk*)	Mr. Vale.
DARK SAM	Mr. Stilt.

CHARACTERS IN THE DREAM.

EUSTON (*a ruined gentleman*) ..	Mr. Lawler.
MR. FEZZIWIG	Mr. Dixie.
OLD JOE (*a fence*)..	Mr. Goldsmith.



Theatre Royal, Adelphi,

(Lessee, THOMAS GLADSTANE, 411, Strand)

Great Attraction—Four Popular Pieces Every Evening

THE SIXTH WEEK OF THE

Original CHRISTMAS CAROL!

The Only Dramatic Version sanctioned by C. DICKENS, Esq.

Antony & Cleopatra Married & Settled

GREETED WITH ROARS OF LAUGHTER.

ULRICA; or, The Prisoner of State!

With its Novel Scenery and Extraordinary Effects, Completely Successful.

REVIVAL of DEEDS of DREADFUL NOTE

MONDAY, March 11th, 1844, and During the Week,

A Drama of Peculiar and Novel Construction, in THREE STAVES, founded on and called A

Christmas Carol:

Or, PAST, PRESENT and FUTURE.

Which will be presented with New Scenery, Novel Mechanical Effects, Pretty Dances and appropriate Old English Ballad Music

Acting by Mess. PRITT and BENNETT. Dresses by Mr. LOBBEE and Mrs. GORDON. Machinery by Mr. BOOKER.

Music by Mr. HOWARD. Dances by Mr. ROGERS & Pupils.

And the Piece Dramatized and Produced by Mr. EDWARD STIRLING.

AUTHOR'S NOTE—I have endeavoured in this Ghostly little Book to raise the Ghost of an idea which shall not put my readers out of humour with themselves, with each other, with the Season, or with me—may it haunt their houses and no one wish to lay it.

Scene the First—The First of the Three Spirits.

Scrooge, (*a Man who has no Christmas Heart*—*a name only GOOD when Christ is*) Mr. O. SMITH.
Uncle Bob (*cheerful, kind, Fat, Jolly, Rosy, Warm, & Well and fed*) Mr. WRIGHT.
Mr. Fezziwig (*Scrooge's Master, Jolly, Fat, and Jovial*) Mr. SMITH.
Dr. Dilworthy ... (*a Pedagogue*) ... Mr. JOHNSON. Master Scrooge ... (*a School Boy*) ... Master LIGHTFOOT.
Young Scrooge and Dick Wilkins (*2 Boys Apprentices*) Mr. BRAID and Mr. LESLIE. Post Boy ... Mr. HONEY.
The Dirty Little Boy ... (*who met the way*) Master MOLINER. Fiddler, Mr. SHAW.
Mrs. Fezziwig, (*Beaming and Loveable*) Mrs. WOOLLIDGE.
Bella Marion ... (*Scrooge's first, his only love, late gold*) ... Miss WOOLGAR.
The Ghost of Christmas Past. (*Cruel and a Strange Paper—like a Child!*) Miss K. CHAPLIN.
Little Fan. (*Scrooge's Sister*) Miss MOTT. Mary, the Tenants—Sally, the Cook—their Friends, Neighbours, &c.

CHAMBER OF SCROOGE. THE MISER.

Air ... THE BAFFLED KNIGHT.

"A Capital Story" ... Christmas Eve ... Christmas Carol ... Air ... DISTANT BELLS,
Air ... GRIM KING OF GHOSTS. The First of the Series. Christmas Past. Appears. Air LITTLE MUSGRAVE.
A CHILD's STORY BOOK. Home for the Holidays. Air ... HURRY ALONG.
Air ... LOVE LIES BLEEDING.

FEZZIWIG'S BALL.

Scene Second—The Second of the Three Spirits.

Scrooge ... (*the Miser*) ... Mr. O. SMITH.
Nephew Fred. ... Mr. MAYNARD. Bob Cratchit. ... Mr. WRIGHT.
Master Peter Cratchit, Master BRUNTON. Master Tom Cratchit, Master SCOTT. Sea Captain, Mr. JONES.
Tiny Tim (*Cratchit's poor Tiny Tim—he bore a little crutch, & sat his little body supported by an iron frame*) Miss MAYNARD.
VISION OF DOOR—Ignorance, Mr. CRANE. Want, Mr. HOLMES. Mariners, Messrs. ROUSH & RAINS.
Butchers, Grocers, Ballad Singers, Passengers, Merchants, Small Purchasers, Visitors, &c.

Mrs. Bob Cratchit (*Wife to Mr. Bob—dressed out but poorly in a twice turned gown, but brave in ribbons*) Mrs. MATTHEWS
Martha Cratchit, Miss LEE. Belinda Cratchit, Miss O. HICKS. Sally Cratchit, Miss JOHNSON.
The Ghost of Christmas Present. ... (*with a Song, "A Jolly Giant gloriously to see"*) ... Mr. FORMAN.

SCROOGE'S CHAMBER. — THE DREAM.

Ghosts, Spirits, &c. Shadowy ... Air, LADY FRANCES NEVILLE'S DELIGHT. QUICK STEPS.
The Jovial Appearance of Christmas Present in the Throne of Plenty, Health & Comfort.
He was a jolly Giant, glorious to see

Song by G. H. RODWELL, Esq. ... Air, EXACTLY WHAT IT OUGHT TO BE. The Summer of life.

CLARE MARKET, by Gaslight.—CHRISTMAS EVE.

Air, ... CHRISTMAS COMES BUT ONCE A YEAR.
Grocers, Pastrycooks, Fruiterers, &c. &c. all with their goodly show ... Purchaser of Bob's Goose ... What a lovely thing a
The Poor Man's Morning, Content. The Poor Clerk's Heart ... Merry Christmas. Home, Home! ... Air, TRIP AND GO. Street Cry

Bob Cratchits, Camden Town.—Christmas Dinner.

Air, OLD KING COLE Cheerful Mother, Wife Children, Move of the Goose, Family Party, The Father and her Little Child. They Tho.
Dinner, The Goose The Pudding. Air, LOTS OF PLUM PUDDING! A Feast to Founder. Blind Man's Buff
The Hint—Working of the Spell—" Let the lessons live with you "—Dwelling, Ignorance & Want.

FACSIMILE OF FIRST HALF OF PLAY-BILL OF "A CHRISTMAS CAROL," AT THE ADELPHI THEATRE, 1844.

[*To face p.* 190.

Ghost of Jacob Marley ..	Mr. Morrison.
Ghost of Christmas Past ..	Mr. Lewis
Ghost of Christmas Present	Mr. Heslop.
Ghost of Christmas to Come	* * * *
Dark Sam	Mr. Stilt.
Peter (*Bob's eldest son*)	Miss Daly.
Tiny Tim	Master Brady.
Mrs. Freeheart..	Mrs. Hicks.
Ellen (*Scrooge's former love*) ..	Mrs. H. Hughes.
Mrs Cratchit	Mrs. Daly.

The writer of the piece, C. Z. Barnett, wrote in the printed play : " This Dramatic Sketch is adapted from Mr. Charles Dickens's very charming ' Christmas Carol ' published by Messrs. Chapman and Hall, Strand. The extreme necessity—(the consequence of its high and deserved popularity)—that so imperatively called for its representation upon the Stage, has also demanded its publication as a Drama, which it is the Adapter's sincere wish, as it is his conviction, will considerably augment the sale of the original lovely and humanizing creation upon which it is founded." Which was a pretty cool " advertisement." At Sadler's Wells that excellent actor, Henry Marston, at the same time was playing Scrooge.

It is of extreme interest to note that it was in the play by Stirling that the late popular comedian, John Lawrence Toole, made one of his greatest hits on January 14th, 1860, as Bob Cratchit, at the

Adelphi, under the management of Benjamin Webster, with Mrs. Alfred Mellon as Mrs. Cratchit. The chief reason of the interest lies in the fact that Charles Dickens was one of the first to encourage Toole in his theatrical endeavours. In 1842, when writing "Bleak House," and just prior to going to Dover, the great novelist found time amid many occupations and some anxieties, for a good-natured journey to Walworth to see a youth rehearse who was supposed to have talents for the stage, and he was able to gladden the hearts of Mr. Toole's friends by thinking favourably of his chances. "I remember what I once wanted in that way," he said, "and I should like to serve him." And he did in more ways than one. That Dickens's judgment was correct soon became apparent by the rapid progress the young actor made in his chosen profession. Concerning this revival Toole used to tell a very good story:

"It was when I was playing Bob Cratchit," said Mr. Toole to Joseph Hatton, his life-long friend and biographer, "in the 'Christmas Carol' at the Adelphi, under Mr. Webster's management, and every night at eight o'clock for forty nights I had to serve a goose and a plum pudding. Mr. Webster provided a real goose and a real plum pudding, which were served smoking hot for Mrs. Cratchit and

the seven little Cratchits, including, of course, Tiny Tim. The children always had enormous portions given them, and all ate heartily every night; but what troubled me was the conduct of the little girl who played Tiny Tim. That child's appetite appalled me. I could not help noticing the extraordinary rapidity with which she consumed what I gave her, and she looked so wan and thin, and so pitiful, that her face used positively to haunt me. I used to say to myself before I began, 'Well, Tiny Tim shall have enough this time, at all events,' and I piled her plate more and more each evening until I remember she had on one occasion more than half the bird, besides potatoes and apple sauce. It puzzled me to know how she could even carry it away to the fireplace, where she sat on a low stool, in accordance with the story, much less eat it.

"To my amazement she carried it and cleared her plate as quickly and as eagerly as ever, pushing forward for plum-pudding with the others. I grew alarmed and spoke to Mrs. Alfred Mellon, who was playing Mrs. Cratchit, respecting this strange phenomenon.

"'I don't like it,' I said; 'I can't conceive where a poor delicate little thing like that puts the food. Besides, although I like the children to enjoy a treat'—and how they kept on enjoying

it for forty nights was a mystery to me, for I got into such a condition that if I dined at a friend's house and goose was on the table, I regarded it as a personal affront—I said, referring to Tiny Tim, 'I don't like greediness; and it is additionally repulsive in a refined-looking, delicate little thing like this; besides, it destroys the sentiment of the situation—and when I, as Bob, ought to feel most pathetic, I am always wondering where the goose and pudding are, or whether anything serious in the way of a fit will happen to Tiny Tim before the audience in consequence of her unnatural gorging.' Mrs. Mellon laughed at me at first, but eventually we decided to watch Tiny Tim together. We watched as well as we could, and the moment Tiny Tim was seated and began to eat, we observed a curious shuffling movement at the stage fireplace, and everything that I had given her, goose and potatoes and apple sauce, disappeared behind the sham stove, the child pretending to eat as heartily as ever from the empty plate.

"When the performance was over, Mrs. Mellon and myself asked the little girl what became of the food she did not eat, and, after a little hesitation, frightened lest she should get into trouble, which we assured her could not happen, she confessed that her little sister (I should mention that they were

the children of one of the scene-shifters) waited on the other side of the stage fireplace for the supplies, and that the whole family enjoyed a hearty supper every evening out of the plentiful portions to which I, as Bob Cratchit, had assisted Tiny Tim.

"Dickens was very much interested in the incident. When I had finished, he smiled a little sadly, I thought, and then shaking me by the hand he said, 'Ah, you ought to have given her the whole goose.'"

The versatile Seymour Hicks, by the way, played a version of the "Carol" prepared by J. C. Buckstone called "Scrooge," at the Vaudeville Theatre, October 3rd, 1901. In the cast were Mr. Hicks himself as Scrooge; Holbrook Blinn as the Ghost of Jacob Marley; Stanley Brett as Fred Wayland; Compton Coutts as Bob Cratchit; J. C. Buckstone as Mr. Middlemark; George Mudie, junr., as Mr. Worthington; Miss Hilda Antony as Mrs. Fred Wayland; Miss Florence Lloyd as Mrs. Cratchit; and Master George Hersee as Tiny Tim. Mr. Hicks made a great hit as the old miser, and he has since acted the piece with much appreciation in a condensed form at the Coliseum and other variety houses.

Mr. Bransby Williams has made certain characters of Dickens almost his own, and he, too, gives

a good account of himself as Scrooge. Indeed, Mr. Bransby Williams has made a quite extensive gallery of characters out of Dickens and presented "Scrooge" some ten years at least before Mr. Seymour Hicks played his version at the Vaudeville Theatre, and afterwards on the variety stage.

In Mr. Williams's very comprehensive volume telling of his experiences, entitled "An Actor's Story," will be found full particulars of this popular comedian's ups and downs, with a graphic account of his successes in his various impersonations, which include Jingle, Chadband, Sydney Carton, Quilp, and the grandfather in "The Old Curiosity Shop." These were in the beginning. Afterwards Mr. Williams tackled Serjeant Buzfuz, Dick Swiveller, Montague Tigg, Pecksniff, Bill Sikes, Dan'l Peggotty, Newman Noggs, and many characters from "Barnaby Rudge. It was Edward Terry, a most eccentric Micawber himself, who suggested that individual as a study worthy of Mr. Williams's consideration.

A peculiar interest apart from purely literary considerations attaches to the "Carol." A reading of it for the benefit of the new Midland Institute in the Birmingham Town Hall on December 27th, 1853, was the first of the platform appearances of Dickens as an interpreter of his own books. I always think that when Dickens drew Scrooge he had not

BRANSBY WILLIAMS AS SCROOGE.

Photo by Campbell-Gray, Ltd.

[*To face p.* 196.

forgotten Gabriel Grub in the story told in the "Pickwick Papers" by Mr. Wardle, called "Story of the Goblins who stole a Sexton." At Christmas-time, 1859, "The Carol," as it was ever affectionately called, was presented in extravaganza form at the Adelphi, by the way.

The next Christmas Story, "The Chimes," appeared in December, 1845. The conception and writing of this tale seems to have caused great trouble and anxiety, but one day Shakespeare's line "we have heard the CHIMES at midnight, Master Shallow," flashed through his brain, and Dickens knew that he had found what he wanted. "It is a great thing to hear my title," he said, October 8th, "and see my way to work the bells. Let them clash upon me now from all the churches and convents in Genoa, I see nothing but the old belfry I have set them in. In my mind's eye, Horatio, I like more and more my notion of making, in this little book, a great blow for the poor. Something powerful, I think I can do, but I want to be tender too, and cheerful; as like the 'Carol' in that respect as may be. The duration of the action will resemble it a little, but I trust to the novelty of the machinery to carry that off; and if my design be anything at all, it has a grip upon the very throat of time." His object in writing "The Chimes" was to champion

the cause of the poor. "The Chimes," by the way, was written in Genoa, and it was finished on the third of November.

"The Chimes: A Goblin Story of Some Bells that Rang an Old Year out and a New Year in, a Drama in Four Quarters," by Mark Lemon and Gilbert Abbot à Becket, was produced at the Adelphi Theatre, December 19th, 1844, by special permission of Charles Dickens himself, both the dramatists being his personal friends. To the latter it had been read by John Forster as soon as it was concluded.

THE CHIMES.

PROLOGUE (*The Spirit of the Chimes*)	Miss E. Chaplin.
TOBY VECK	Mr. O. Smith.
ALDERMAN CUTE	Mr. Edward Wright.
FILER	Mr. Lambert.
CHOKER	Mr. J. Cullenford.
RICHARD	Mr. Charles Selby.
JABEZ	Mr. Munyard.
JOHN	Mr. Saunders.
TUGBY	Mr. Wilkinson.
SIR JOSEPH BOWLEY BART, M.P.	Mr. Paul Bedford.
MR. FISH	Mr. C. J. Smith.
WILL FERN	Mr. Hudson.
MR. LINT	Mr. Cowl.
GOBLIN OF THE BELL	Mr. Worrell.
GOBLINS	Mr. Freeborn. Mr. Glennaire. Mr. Waye.
MEGGY VECK	Miss Fortescue.

SCENE FROM "THE CHIMES," AT THE ADELPHI THEATRE, 1844.

[*To face p.* 108.

Mrs. Chickenstalker ..	Mrs. F. Matthews.
Lady Bowley	Miss E. Harding.
Lilian	Miss Turtle.
Lilian (*aged eighteen*)	Miss M. Taylor.

Villagers, Peasants, and Visitors.

Miss Ellen Chaplin spoke the following rhymed prologue as Spirit of the Chimes—

> High up above the city's noise and light,
> Dwelt the old Chimes of which we tell to-night,
> Their iron voices fell upon the ear,
> Not speechless were those bells, but loud and clear,
> And none e'er listened for their measured sound,
> Or in their booming clearer language found,
> Than poor old Trotty Veck. For many a year
> The Chimes were wont his drooping heart to cheer.
> They told of newer hopes and better times,
> And poor old Trotty dearly loved the Chimes,
> But Trotty oft would doubt . . . where want hath cried,
> And roused sleek Plenty's anger . . . as it died.
> When he hath heard the "putters down" of woe
> Taunting Despair and mocking every throe,
> Then would he doubt if poverty had claim
> To any goodness . . . whatsoe'er it's name.
> He doubted if the poor man's heart could own
> The sympathies he deemed were wealth's alone—
> Then grew repining—mourned the "good old times"—
> —Until he learned a lesson from our Chimes."

This was a great success, and consequently unauthorised versions cropped up everywhere. It affected everybody very deeply, and reduced both À'Becket, Macready, Thackeray, and other old stagers to tears. Mrs. Charles Calvert prepared a

version, which was played at the Gaiety Theatre, December 26th, 1872.

TROTTY VECK.

Trotty Veck	Mr. J. L. Toole.
Sir Joseph Bowley	Mr. Robert Soutar.
Mr. Filer	Mr. J. G. Taylor.
Mr. Fish	Mr. Crutwell.
Will Fern	Mr. Alfred Bishop.
Meg	Miss Margaret Cooper.
Lady Bowley	Mrs. H. Leigh.

In the following January—1873—Mr. Arthur Williams was responsible for "Christmas Chimes, or Trotty Veck's Dream," produced at the Pavilion Theatre.

CHRISTMAS CHIMES.

Trotty Veck	Mr. Arthur Williams.
Alderman Cute	Mr. George Yates.
Richard	Mr. Charles Reeve.
Jabez	Mr. Clingan Jones.
Tugby	Mr. J. Clifton.
Sir Joseph Bowley	Mr. T. Morrison.
Mr. Fish	Mr. George English.
Will Fern	Mr. Alfred Rayner.
Meg	Miss Jennie Grainger.
Mrs. Chickenstalker ..	Mrs. Murray.
Lilian	Miss Liske.

The famous "The Cricket on the Hearth," was the next of the Christmas Stories dramatised, and dramatised by "many hands" too, for the story lent itself most admirably to stage representation. The title of the "Cricket on the Hearth" came from

Dickens accidentally turning up in the dictionary: "Cricket: A cheerful creature that chirrups on the hearth." He took to the idea at once and writes, "What do you think of a notion that has occurred to me in connection with our abandoned little weekly" (he is referring to "Master Humphrey's Clock" which was one of his few failures). "It would be a beautiful and delicate fancy for a Christmas book making the Cricket a little household god—silent in the wrong and sorrow of the tale, and loud again when all went well and happy." The reader, says John Forster, need not be told that thus originated the story of "The Cricket on the Hearth, a Fairy Tale of Home," which had a great popularity in the Christmas days of 1845. Its sale at the outset doubled that of both its predecessors.

The first dramatic version was done by Albert Smith, at the special request of Charles Dickens, for the Keeleys, who were still managing the Lyceum Theatre, and it was presented for the first time in December, 1845.

THE CRICKET ON THE HEARTH.

JOHN PEERYBINGLE (*a carrier*)	Mr. Sam Emery.
MR. TACKLETON (*a toy maker*)	Mr. Meadows.
CALEB PLUMMER (*his man*) ..	Mr. Keeley.
OLD GENTLEMAN	Mr. Vining.

PORTER	Mr. Yarnold.
DOT'S FATHER	Mr. Bender.
NEIGHBOURS.	
A LITTLE JOHN PEERYBINGLE	Master Forest.
DOT	Mrs. Keeley.
BERTHA (*a blind girl*)	Miss Mary Keeley
MRS. FIELDING	Mrs. Woollidge.
MAY FIELDING	Miss Howard.
TILLY SLOWBOY	Miss Turner.
MRS. DOT	Miss Forster.
SPIRIT OF THE CRICKET ..	Miss Dawson.
TWELVE VERY LITTLE FAIRIES	Twelve Children.
A VERY LITTLE DOT	Miss Frampton.
A VERY LITTLE TILLY SLOWBOY	* * * *

This went with a bang, as they say. Its human touches were and always will be irresistible.

Dickens himself took the greatest interest in the performance and in the Keeleys.

Miss Mary Keeley was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Keeley, and this was her first appearance on the stage.

Of course Edward Stirling had a shot at it for the Adelphi, when Mrs. FitzWilliam played Dot; O. Smith, John Peerybingle; Miss Woolgar, Bertha; Mr. Lambert, Caleb Plummer; Miss Ellen Chaplin, the Spirit of the Cricket; and Edward Wright, Tilly Slowboy. One was also given at the Old Bower Saloon, Stangate, Lambeth, January 8th, 1846, in the form of a pantomime! At the City of London Theatre, January 5th, W. T. Townsend

SCENE FROM "THE CRICKET ON THE HEARTH," AT THE LYCEUM, 1845.

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produced "The Cricket on the Hearth" with the following cast: Messrs. Lyon, E. Jones, R. Honner, H. T. Craven (of "Meg's Diversion" fame), and "Bob" Romer. Mrs. R. Honner was an actress much esteemed at the minor theatres—she played Dot—Miss Egan, Miss Lacy, Miss Lee, and Mrs. Turner. This was later transferred to the Surrey Theatre. Another one, done at the Haymarket, December 27th, 1845, was by Benjamin Webster.

It is a most admirable proof of the popularity of Dickens with all classes to know that not only was the sale of the "Cricket on the Hearth" greater than that of any of the Christmas Stories, but its appeal to theatre-goers was irresistible. For instance, on January 11th, 1846, "The Cricket on the Hearth" was being played at the following theatres:—

The Haymarket.
The Princess's.
The Adelphi.
The Lyceum.
The Olympic (an Extravaganza)
The Strand.
The Queen's (Tottenham Court Road).
The Victoria.
The City of London.
The Surrey.
The Standard, and
The Grecian.

Far and away the best version was that called "Dot," specially dramatised by that past master of dramatic construction, Dion Boucicault, for Mr. J. L. Toole, and played for the first time at the Adelphi Theatre, April 14th, 1862.

DOT.

JOHN PEERYBINGLE	Mr. Sam Emery.
TACKLETON	Mr. C. H. Stephenson.
NED PLUMMER	Mr. J. Billington.
CALEB PLUMMER	Mr. J. L. Toole.
TILLY SLOWBOY	Miss Woolgar.
DOT	Miss Louise Keeley.
BERTHA	Miss H. Simms.
MRS. FIELDING	Mrs. Marston.
GENIUS OF HOME	Miss Kate Kelly.

Ever after "Dot" remained a chief attraction in Mr. Toole's repertoire, as well as "The Chimes" and "Bardell *v.* Pickwick." "Dot" was also done at Sadler's Wells in 1866, with Thomas Swinbourne as Peerybingle, and George Belmore as Caleb Plummer. One of Mr. Toole's stories in regard to "Dot" was that concerning one performance when he was playing Caleb Plummer as usual, when the actress, who was to take the part of the blind girl Bertha, was suddenly taken ill, but the stage manager was equal to the emergency, and sent on a young lady who calmly *read the part.*

Dion Boucicault's version was done afterwards in New York at the Winter Garden Theatre, with H. Pearson as John Peerybingle; T. B. Johnson as Tackleton; A. H. Davenport, the Stranger; and Joseph Jefferson (later to be famous as Rip Van Winkle) as Caleb Plummer. Miss Agnes Robertson

(Mrs. Dion Boucicault) as Dot; and Mrs. John Wood as Tilly Slowboy.

When Mr. Toole went on tour with the piece he selected for his company this judicious cast, starting at the Theatre Royal, Nottingham (1868)—

John Peerybingle	Mr. Reginald Moore.
Gruff Tackleton	Mr. Joseph Eldred.
Caleb Plummer	Mr. J. L. Toole.
Edward Plummer	Mr. Wyke Moore.
Bertha	Miss Eliza Saville.
May Fielding	Miss Ernstone.
Mrs. Fielding	Mrs. J. F. Saville.
Dot	Miss Kate Saville.
Tilly Slowboy	Mr. Arthur Williams.

By the way, speaking of Boucicault, on the title page of his play "The School for Scheming" (Haymarket Theatre, February 4th, 1847), his name is printed thus: "Dion de P. Bourçicault." The work was dedicated to the Duke of Bedford. I believe Dion Boucicault was of Huguenot descent, though born, like his father before him, in Dublin. And certainly an Irishman of Irishmen, and a brilliant dramatist to boot.

We next hear of "Dot" at the Gaiety, December, 1870—

Caleb Plummer	Mr. Toole.
Edward Plummer	Mr. H. Vaughan.
Tackleton	Mr. J. D. Stoyle.
Peerybingle	Mr. John Maclean.
Tilly Slowboy	Miss Nelly Farren.

DOT	Miss Carlotta Addison.
BERTHA	Miss M. Dalton.
MAY	Miss B. Marston.
MRS. FIELDING	Mrs. H. Leigh.

A year later the piece was revived at the same theatre—(January, 1871, to be accurate)—under the title of "A Christmas Story," a musical drama with J. L. Toole in his original character of Caleb Plummer, of course, for it was one of his most famous impersonations; Ellen Farren was especially good as Tilly Slowboy; Miss Carlotta Addison was a touching Dot, and Mr. J. D. Stoyle an admirable Tackleton.

Mr. Edward Terry did a version of the "Cricket" at Belfast many years ago—he can't remember the date, when he played Tackleton.

Quite a unique performance of the "Cricket on the Hearth" was presented by Mr. Arthur Bourchier at the Garrick Theatre, commencing December 1st, 1903. It was described as "A Fairy Tale of Home, adapted from the Celebrated Story by Charles Dickens, in a Warble and Three Chirps."

THE CRICKET ON THE HEARTH.

MORTALS.

CALEB PLUMMER (*a toy maker*)	Mr. Arthur Bourchier.
BERTHA (*his blind daughter*) ..	Miss Violet Vanburgh.
EDWARD (*his son*)	Mr. Frank Mills.
TACKLETON (*of Gruff and Tackleton—his employer*)	Mr. Jerrold Robertshaw

JOHN PEERYBINGLE (*a Carrier*)	Mr. J. H. Barnes.
MARY (*his wife, known as "Dot"*)	Miss Jessie Bateman.
MAY (*her daughter*)	Miss Elfrida Clement.
TILLY SLOWBOY	Miss Lizzie Webster.

IMMORTALS.

THE FAIRY HOME	Miss Dorothy Grimston.
CRICKET .. (*Attendant Fairies*)	Miss Empsie Bowman.
MOONBEAM (*Attendant Fairies*)	Miss Madge Titheradge
KETTLE .. (*Attendant Fairies*)	Master Restall.
CRADLE .. (*Attendant Fairies*)	Master Cane.
OBERON	Miss Annie Mildmay.
TITANIA	Miss Margery Fane.
ARIEL	Miss Nellie Sidney.
PUCK	Master Thomas Lipton.

This was quite a delightful and attractive entertainment, based on the "Toole" play.

A new version of "Dot," by Mr. W. Teignmouth Shore, was an admirable piece at the Cripplegate Institute, December 22nd, 1908, when Mrs. J. T. Grein played the title *rôle*, with Mr. Louis Rihll as Caleb Plummer; Miss Vera Granville as blind Bertha, Mr. F. T. Harry as Tackleton, Miss May Daniel as Tilly, Mr. H. C. M. Reeve as the Stranger, Miss Kathleen Marriott as May, and Miss Connell as Mrs. Fielding, while last but not least the author, Mr. Shore, made a capital John Peerybingle.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie has written an opera called "The Cricket on the Hearth," and Carl Goldmark, the German composer, wrote the music

to a German libretto in 1896. In 1900 this was first done in England at the Brixton Theatre with an English version by Percy Pinkerton. About 1893 Sir Frank Burnand prepared an operatic book for Edward Solomon, but nothing came of it, as the latter died. At Terry's Theatre, December 1st, 1906, another "Cricket," by W. H. C. Nation, was performed.

"The Battle of Life" was the next annual, but somehow neither as a book nor a play did it take the public taste. Dickens himself, although enthusiastic at first, seemed disappointed with his own labours. All the same, it is a pretty and powerful story of sisterly love and devotion, and at moments intensely dramatic. It would have made a bigger book; the canvas selected was not large enough for the picture. Lord Jeffrey accorded the highest praise to the little story, and said: "It is better than any other man alive could have written, and has passages as fine as anything that ever came from the man himself. . . ."

Albert Smith, the author of "The Marquis of Brinvilliers," "Christopher Tadpole," and many other books and adaptations, prepared "The Battle of Life" for the Lyceum with the novelist's own consent, and he travelled expressly from Paris to attend the rehearsals. He was very disappointed

with everything apparently. Writing to his wife from Lincoln's Inn Fields on December 21st, 1846, he said. "I really am bothered to death by this confounded dramatisation of the Christmas Book. They were in a state so horrible at Keeley's yesterday . . . that I was obliged to engage to read the book to them this morning. . . . Unless I had come to London, I do not think there would have been much hope of the version being more than just tolerated, even that doubtful. All the actors bad, all the business frightfully behind hand, the very words of the book confused in the copying into the densest and most insufferable nonsense. I must exempt, however, from the general slackness, both the Keeleys. I hope they will be very good. I have never seen anything of its kind better than the manner in which they played the little supper scene between Clemency and Britain yesterday. It was quite perfect even to me." However, the play went very well when the drama in three acts was produced at the Lyceum Theatre, December 21st, 1846. The drama was specially taken from the novel for Mr. and Mrs. Keeley, who received the highest praise from the *Times* and *Athenæum*, especially for the supper scene that so greatly took Dickens's fancy. Supporting the Keeleys were such well-known people as Frank Matthews as Dr. Jeddler; Leigh

Murray as Alfred Heathfield; F. Vining as Michael Warden; Miss Ellen Daly as Grace Jeddler; and Mrs. Woollidge as Mrs. Snitchey. Mr. Meadows was Mr. Snitchey, with several others.

Edmund Yates, in his "Recollections and Experiences," speaks very highly of Robert Keeley as an actor and as a man, blessed with much common sense and mother wit. He was also a fairly well-read man. In private, as in public, his utterances were given forth with an extraordinary stolidity of manner and expression, which rendered them doubly amusing. "He had a great vein of shrewd, sensible humour," says Yates. "Standing one day at a window of the Swan Inn at Thames Ditton, looking at the ducks wending their way across the lawn in a pouring shower, loudly quacking their delight, Keeley softly muttered under his breath: 'Ha! Ha! damned fools! you don't think how this rain will make the green peas grow!'"

It was during the reign of the Keeleys at the Lyceum that Richard Brinsley Peake, who was connected with the business department of the theatre, had several of his farces produced. Of one of his plays Shirley Brooks used to tell a ridiculous *non sequitur* story: "Who do you say is the author of this farce?" asked an elderly playgoer. "Dickey

SCENE FROM "THE BATTLE OF LIFE," AT THE LYCEUM THEATRE, 1846. MRS. KEELEY AS CLEMENCY AND MR. KEELEY AS BRITAIN.

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Peake? Damned nonsense! he couldn't write a farce! *I knew his father!*"

Yet "Dicky" Peake managed to turn out something like fifty pieces, including an adaptation of Samuel Warren's great story, "Ten Thousand a Year," for Frederick Yates at the Adelphi Theatre.

Albert Smith, who did many adaptations for the Lyceum, married, by the way, the Keeleys' youngest daughter Mary, while Montague Williams married her sister Louise.

Edward Stirling did a "Battle of Life" for the Surrey in January, 1847, while one was given the same month at the City of London with Mrs. Honner as Clemency. Charles Dickens the younger also dramatised the tale, and John Hollingshead produced it at the Gaiety, December 23rd, 1873.

THE BATTLE OF LIFE.

Ben Britain	Mr. J. L. Toole.
Dr. Jeddler	Mr. John Maclean.
Alfred Heathfield	Mr. Charles Neville.
Michael Warden	Mr. Charles Harcourt.
Snitchey	Mr. Lionel Brough.
Craggs	Mr. E. Butler.
Clemency Newcome	Miss Nelly Farren.
Grace Jeddler	Miss Constance Loseby.
Marion	Miss Carlisle.
Mrs. Snitchey	Miss Ewell.
Mrs. Craggs	Miss Jolly.
Aunt Martha	Mrs. Ball.

This was fairly well criticised, but did not achieve the position of revival. Previously, Mr. W. H. C. Nation produced "The Battle of Life" at Astley's Theatre.

On December 6th, 1898, Walter Ellis and Percy Greenwood had their version played at the Royalty Theatre under the title of

MARION.

Dr. Jeddler	Mr. J. G. Taylor.
Alfred	Mr. Herbert Terry.
Michael Warden	Mr. J. C. Beresford.
Snitchey	Mr. E. B. Payne.
Ben Britain	Mr. Percy Greenwood.
Grace	Miss Victoria Wright.
Mrs. Snitchey	Miss Edith Milton.
Mrs. Craggs	Miss Blanche Eversleigh.
Clemency Newcome ..	Miss Ruby Hallier.
Marion	Miss Sidney Crowe.

Other plays called "The Battle of Life" were performed at the Adelphi, Liverpool, August 6th, 1894, and at the Bijou, Bayswater, March, 1901.

"La Bataille de la Vie," from "The Battle of Life," in three acts, by MM. Mélosville and Andre de Goy, was presented at the Vaudeville Theatre in Paris, September 3rd, 1853.

The next Christmas piece was "The Haunted Man," in 1848, which as a story had a large sale, but as a play was never particularly attractive. It

was dramatised and acted at the Adelphi soon after its publication, and revived at the Adelphi, July 10th, 1863, when Mr. Toole as Tetterby was excellent.

A writer in 1870, speaking of "The Haunted Man," said: "At the Adelphi and the Polytechnic Institute this story, by the aid of the patent "Pepper's Ghost apparatus," was produced some three or four years since, and excited considerable attention, and the satisfactory result, in a monetary sense, was testified by the fact of the numerous audiences at each representation."

In the original 1848 cast, Edward Wright and Mrs. Fitzwilliam were the Mr. and Mrs. Tetterby, and Miss Woolgar was a delightful Milly. O. Smith created a very weird effect as the ghost. Mark Lemon was responsible for the dramatisation, which on all hands was voted clever, and it had a fair success. Redlaw, the Haunted Man, is a creation of a sad and sombre hue. The most genial parts are the accounts of Tetterby, the struggling newsvendor, and his family, not forgetting Johnny and the Moloch baby, Sally.

It was played again at Christmas, 1849. The Christmas number of "Household Words" entitled "The Seven Poor Travellers" appeared in December, 1854. This was inspired by a visit to the celebrated Watts Charity at Rochester for six poor travellers to

have "Gratis for one Night, Lodging, Entertainment and Fourpence each." Dickens and Mark Lemon visited the place, May 11th, 1854. The seventh traveller was Dickens himself. He wrote the first and second chapters and the last one. I trace a dramatic version to J. B. Johnstone, author of the "Gipsy Farmer," and "How we Live in the World of London," called by Dickens's title, and it was played in 1856 at the Strand Theatre. Then there was "The Dead Witness; or, Sin and its Shadow," a drama in three acts, founded on "The Widow's Story," one of the chapters in the book which was not written by Dickens himself, although credited to him by the dramatist. This was first produced, according to the book of the play, at the Theatre Royal, Sheffield, under the management of Mr. Charles Pitt. There is no date given, but it would be between 1862 and 1865, when Mr. Reeve was manager for Mr. Pitt. It is very sensational and is in nine scenes. Another, "The Seven Poor Travellers," by C. Duval, was given at the Theatre Royal, Blackburn, January 11th, 1869.

"The Holly Tree" was the Christmas Story in "Household Words" for 1855. On Monday December 31st, a drama called "Holly Tree Inn," in one act, "adapted from Dickens by Benjamin Webster" was performed for the first time at the

SCENE FROM "THE HAUNTED MAN," AT THE ADELPHI THEATRE, 1848.

[*To face p.* 214.

Adelphi with Benjamin Webster as Cobbs, supported by Parselle as George the Guest; J. G. Shore as Mr. Walmers, the father; Robert Romer as Sam Tattenhall, the Landlord; Waye as Isaac the Ostler; Pouran as Tom the Waiter, and Messrs. Hastings, Honey, and Sanders in the small parts. Harry was played by Master Powell, and Norah by Miss Thompson. I have reason to believe this was Miss Lydia Thompson, who had already appeared as a child dancer at Her Majesty's Theatre in 1852, and as a child actress at the Haymarket, 1852, in "Little Silverhair," and again in 1854. Mrs. Tattenhall the Landlady, was taken by Mrs. Lelachere, and the Barmaid by Miss Laidlaw. In the *Era* for Sunday, January 13th, 1856, there was a criticism of the second play, which began: "Strand—A new drama, under the designation of 'The Holly Tree Inn' by Mr. J. B. Johnstone, was produced here last Monday." That would be the seventh. The theatre was under the management of Mr. T. Payne, and in the cast, as advertised, were Messrs. Basil Potter, G. Cooke, Kinloch, Clarke, Hall, and Johnstone; Mesdames Herbert, Barrett, Somers, Stevens, and Master and Miss Edouin. These were the late Willie Edouin and his sister who is still with us. This was Miss Louisa Herbert's first appearance in London. She was later quite a favourite actress, and for some time

was manageress of the St. James's Theatre. Both plays proved highly attractive to the holiday folk.

Another "Holly Tree Inn" was given at the Grecian, February 27th, 1856.

At Terry's Theatre "The Holly Tree," adapted by Mrs. Oscar Beringer, was played first on January 15th, 1891, and revived December 28th, 1896. On the first occasion the parts were distributed as follows: Harry, Vera Beringer; Nora, Minnie Terry, both delightful. The Jabez Cobb of Ernest Hendrie was Dickens to the life, and Mr. H. Reeves Smith made a capital Captain Walmers. On the occasion of the revival, Master Stewart-Dawson and Miss Valli-Valli played the two children, while George Belmore was Cobbs, and Miss Kate Mills, Mrs. Cobbs.

In 1860, Charles Dickens's Christmas offering was "A Message from the Sea." This was really the joint work of Dickens and Wilkie Collins—two of the most dissimilar writers that ever lived—and the two authors travelled into Devonshire and Cornwall for local colour, the scene being laid in Clovelly. The greater part of the tale is decidedly by Dickens. One of the characters, Captain Jorgan, was drawn from an American seaman, Captain Morgan, to whom the novelist wrote: "Here and there, in the description of the sea-going hero, I have given a touch or two of remembrance of

Somebody you know; very heartily desiring that thousands of people may have some faint reflection of the pleasure I have for many years derived from the contemplation of a most amiable nature and most remarkable man."

It was clearly Dickens's intention to collaborate with Wilkie Collins in turning the story into a play, as in the British Museum there is a small eight-page brochure which traces the plot and action of Acts I. and II., and then: "Act the Third passes in Tregarthen's cottage at Steepways and the story is unravelled as in the Christmas number of 'All the Year Round,' embodying the scenes in Chapter V., 'The Restitution,' and ending with the villagers all coming in and cheering Captain Jorgan on his departure for America as heartily as they execrated him in Act I." The title page runs thus:

A MESSAGE FROM THE SEA

A Drama in Three Acts

by

CHARLES DICKENS

and

WILKIE COLLINS

An Outline of the Plot.

LONDON: Published by G. Holsworth
At the office of "All the Year Round"
Wellington Street, Strand.
1861.

Then the cast of the nine characters is given, which I reproduce as a curiosity.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

CAPTAIN JORGAN (*part owner and commander of an American Liner*).
HUGH RAYBROCK (*second mate of merchantman—supposed to be drowned*).
ALFRED RAYBROCK (*his younger brother*).
LAWRENCE CLISSOLD (*supercargo of a merchantman, formerly in the house of the Dringworth Brothers*).
TREGARTHEN (*steward of manor rights at Steepways, formerly also with Dringworth Brothers*).
TOM PETTIFER (*Captain Jorgan's steward*).
MRS. RAYBROCK (*mother of Hugh and Alfred*).
MARGARET (*married to Hugh*).
KITTY (*Tregarthen's daughter; betrothed to Alfred*).

Why this should be printed goodness only knows. I cannot trace the play. Nor does Forster mention it or even the story in his "Life of Dickens."

A drama, however, was constructed out of the plot by John Brougham. It was in four acts and was first performed in America in 1860, and in London at the Britannia Theatre in 1861, and I fancy it has often been revived at various outlying theatres, though I have no exact data to go upon. There are thirteen characters in John Brougham's production, and as many scenes. It reads well. At the Britannia the players were Messrs. F. Wilton, F. Marchant, J. Reynolds, T. G. Drummond, S.

Sidney, W. Crawford, M. Smythson, and D. Stewart; Mrs. W. Newham, Miss E. Clayton, and Mrs. E. Yarnold.

Another play on the same subject was produced at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, Birmingham, August 30th, 1869.

On February 1st, 1873, "A Message from the Sea" was presented at the Surrey Theatre. No author's name is given, but as Miss Virginia Blackwood was the manageress of the theatre, I expect it was the handiwork of her husband, Murray Wood. This was revived at Astley's Theatre, October 14th, 1878.

Hugh Raybrock ..	.. Mr. Nelson Wheatcroft.
Silas Jorgan	.. Mr. G. Murray Wood.
Tom Pettifer	.. Mr. Harry Cornwall.
Lawrence Clissold ..	.. Mr. H. Monte.
Alfred Raybrock ..	.. Mr. Frank Cates.
Mr. Tregarthen ..	.. Mr. Edward Chamberlaine.
Mrs. Raybrock ..	.. Miss Fanny Wright.
Kitty Tregarthen ..	.. Miss Hilda Dunbar.
Margaret Raybrock ..	.. Miss Emilie Blackwood.
Mog	.. Miss Virginia Blackwood.

That exceedingly careful writer on Dickens, Mr. J. W. T. Ley, says: "Of the various adaptations of Dickens's books in which Mr. Toole appeared, there is not, so far as we know, any complete list, but he

appeared in versions of every one of the five Christmas books." And then he names the characters, of all of which I have treated. Mr. Ley adds that Caleb Plummer was Mr. Toole's first departure "from pure comedy." Mr. Ley means "farce." In Mr. Toole's "Reminiscences," edited by Joseph Hatton, the late homely comedian says: "I read Dickens, and tried at home and while about in the streets to put myself in the position of Caleb. I think I succeeded in getting inside the part. I know I felt for the sufferings of the poor old chap and did my best to make my audience feel them, and if applause was any criterion that I had satisfied them, I had plenty of it, a very hearty call at the close, and next day the highest commendations of the Press."

Several of Dickens's Christmas Books have been converted into cantatas and plays with music for amateur performance, but it is not always possible to trace these works. One very creditable piece, however, deserves more than passing mention. It is entitled "A Christmas Carol: Being a Ghost Story in Four Staves, by Charles Dickens." This was arranged for dramatic representation by J. Edward Parrott, M.A., LL.B., with various old-time Christmas hymns and carols introduced at suitable places in the dialogue.

CHAPTER XIII

"DOMBEY AND SON"

WHEN Dickens's eldest son was attacked by scarlet fever he was in charge of his grandmother, Mrs. Hogarth, in Albany Street, Regent's Park, and when Mr. and Mrs. Dickens went to see their boy a small incident occurred that is worth recording. An elderly charwoman employed about the place had shown so much sympathy in the family trouble, that Mrs. Hogarth specially told her of the approaching visit, and who it was that was coming to the sick-room. "Lawk, ma'am!" she said. "Is the young gentleman upstairs the son of the man that put together 'Dombey'?" Reassured upon this point, she explained her question by declaring that she never thought there was one man that *could* put together "Dombey." Being further pressed as to what her notion was of this mystery of a Dombey (for it was known she could not read), it turned out that she lodged at a snuff shop kept by a person named Douglas, where there were several other lodgers; and that on the first Monday of

every month there was a Tea, and the landlord read the month's number of "Dombey;" those only of the lodgers who subscribed to the tea partaking of that luxury, but all having the benefit of the reading; and the impression produced on the old charwoman revealed itself in the remark with which she closed her account of it. "Lawk, ma'am! I thought that three or four men at least must have put together 'Dombey'!" Dickens thought there was something of a compliment in this, and was very gratified.

It has been usually said that "Dombey and Son" is the least popular of the novelist's works, and it is generally conceded that the descriptions of high life are somewhat forced. To tell the truth, Dickens was not happy in his depictions of aristocratic people, and neither his men nor his women in the "upper circles" are well drawn. However, the book is full of admirable characters—especially the whimsical and extravagant. Little Paul and the immortal Captain Cuttle—"when found make a note of"—are the two best characters in the book. But Mr. Toots is a gem, and then there are Perch the messenger and his prolific progeny; the terrible Mrs. MacStinger, the delightful Susan Nipper, Major Joe Bagstock and many others, and the very lovable Florence. Carker is a villain, certainly, of the

deepest dye, while Dombey himself is a cruel brute, detested of all.

There was no real run on "Dombey and Son" for the theatre, though scrappy pieces were presented at Sadler's Wells, and the Surrey, the managements chiefly relying upon the magic name of Dickens, in very large type, to draw the always uncertain public.

The first dramatisation of "Dombey and Son" was first produced at the Strand Theatre on Monday night, August 2nd, 1847. A notice of the piece appeared in the *Theatrical Times* for August 14th. "The prestige attached to this house, in connexion with the works of Charles Dickens, dramatically illustrated, is of very long standing. Hammond's Sam Weller is still fresh in the recollection of the town, and 'Martin Chuzzlewit' had a run which, for many weeks, sustained the falling fortunes of the establishment, when under the management of Roberts. We were not, therefore, surprised at the announcement made by the present indefatigable lessee, that 'Dombey and Son,' the latest serial by Boz, was about to be presented, albeit a more difficult story for the purposes of the playwright could scarcely have been selected. The most we can expect in a dramatised novel is to see some of the best and most stirring scenes taken out, and

the engravings realised in the shape of *tableaux; and Dickens owes no little of his success as an author to the skill of the adaptors of his works.*" I have italicised the last sentence as being one of the most astounding and ridiculous statements ever made. To resume. "'Dombey and Son' was produced here on Monday. The original work not being yet concluded by the author, Mr. T. P. Taylor, the adapter, has had to exercise his ingenuity for the catastrophe. We will not say that he has anticipated Mr. Dickens, but his concluding scenes are highly creditable; though we shall not trespass upon the time of our readers by describing the plot, advising them to witness and judge for themselves. A few remarks occur to us as to the principal characters:—Mr. C. Williams made an efficient Mr. Dombey, and Mr. Reeves showed, by his representation of Carker, that he was well studied in the character of the wily manager of Dombey and Son.. Mr. Tyrrel was rather stickish, and a great deal too plausible as Walter Gay; Mr. Huntly is a low comedian of merit, but Major Bagstock is above his grasp; Mr. Rogerson made the most of Captain Cuttle; Solomon Gills is a part well suited to Mr. Ayliffe; Mr. Richardson was created for Rob the Grinder. The ladies follow, and here we must pay a tribute to the artistic acting of Mr. Harwood

Cooper as Good Mrs. Brown; it was the best sustained character in the piece. Miss Marian Atkins looked and played the haughty beauty, Edith Granger, remarkably well. Mrs. H. Hearne made an amusing Susan Nipper; and Florence Dombey found an efficient representation in Miss Coleman. The whole of the performers seemed to exert themselves to the utmost; and it is due to the efficient management of Mr. Cooper to state that the piece is put upon the stage with the greatest taste and care. The theatre is well attended. An amusing ballet, in which Stilt (from Sadler's Wells) appears, has filled the house at half-price." This strikes one as being a very good theatrical picture of the period.

"Dombey's" second appearance on the London stage was at the Marylebone Theatre in June, 1849. "The story was cleverly dramatised and well represented . . . and its success was in proportion to its merits."

When this play was published it was called "Dombey and Son; or, Good Mrs. Brown, the Child Stealer. A Drama in Two Acts. From the Pen of the inimitable Charles Dickens, Esqre. As performed at the Strand Theatre." There is one illustration to this precious fraud, depicting "Mrs. Brown, the Child Stealer, proving the innocence of

Walter Gay, and accusing Carker of forgery," and many liberties were taken with Dickens's plot.

John Brougham provided a four-act drama called "Dombey and Son" for Burton's Theatre, New York, in 1848, as soon as the work was issued in its completed form, and undertook the part of Major Bagstock and Jack Bunsby himself, while his wife played Susan Nipper. Mr. W. E. Burton, the proprietor of the theatre, was the Captain Cuttle, and Mrs. Burton, Florence Dombey.

Joseph Jefferson, in his "Autobiography," says: "The production at Burton's Theatre of 'Dombey and Son,' by Mr. Brougham, was a curious combination of failure and success. Much was expected of Burton's Captain Cuttle, and to the surprise of the expectant critics and of Burton himself he did nothing with it." Many reasons are given for Burton's failure—and Burton was a great "star" in his day, who, dismayed at his own non-success, and mortified at young Raymond's leap forward, took the drama from the bills. Raymond had made his mark as Toots. Then he went to work to study the part properly and made a magnificent hit, and according to Jefferson he was "perfect" in a new version which he and Brougham concocted together. This version, published by French, soon got to London, and was acted "everywhere." Then Brougham set

to work and made another play which was called "Captain Cuttle," a comic drama in one act, being more scenes from the novel of "Dombey and Son." This went into the bills of Burton's Theatre, New York, January 14th, 1850, and was a complete success. Different scenes were relied upon, and the whole of the MacStinger family were introduced. W. E. Burton was, of course, Captain Cuttle; John Brougham, Jack Bunsby; Mrs. Vernon, Mrs. MacStinger; Mrs. Brougham, The Nipper; and Oliver Raymond in his creation of Toots. The late Sir Henry Irving played Mr. Dombey in this drama when it was first presented in Manchester in 1867.

There is no gainsaying the fact that in the country "Dombey and Son" proved very attractive for a long time, crude as it was. The very best dramatisation, however, was that arranged by Andrew Halliday called "Heart's Delight," and produced at the Globe Theatre, Newcastle Street, Strand, December 17th, 1873, then under the management of H. J. Montague. Mr. J. C. Cowper undertook the characters of Mr. Dombey and Jack Bunsby; James Fernandez that of Carker; H. J. Montague, Walter Gay and Mr. Toots; Sam Emery, Captain Cuttle; Howard, Sol Gills; A. Deane, Rob the Grinder; J. H. Allen, Brogley; Miss Carlotta

Addison made a charming Florence; Miss Helen Barry a stately Edith Dombey, and Miss Maria Daly a quaint Susan Nipper. The best performance of all, however, was that of Sam Emery as Captain Cuttle. A critic wrote at the time: "When Mr. Emery comes rolling on to the stage, made up to the very life after the pictures by 'Phiz,' with the rubicund face and the bald pate, the coarse canvas open shirt, and the hook instead of a right hand, the roar that greets the favourite shows that half the actor's work is over. He looks the part, and there is no prejudice on that account." Mr. Emery's impersonation was one of his greatest artistic achievements, fit to rank with his Dan'l Peggotty. Mr. Emery was the original Jonas Chuzzlewit, Will Fern, and John Peerybingle.

From America in the fall of 1880 came Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Florence, who were great favourites in their own country, to the Gaiety, with John. Brougham's "Captain Cuttle" and "The Mighty Dollar." The first-named piece was revived on November 20th. Mr. Florence's impersonation was faithful to the novel, and he exhibited no less humour than he did as the Hon. Bardwell Slote. He was well supported by an English company—"John Hollingshead's own"—which included Charles Fawcett, J. L. Shine, Tom Squire, Fred Hughes,

Berte Coote, Mrs. Leigh, Myra Holme (now Lady Pinero), Miss Amalia and Constance Gilchrist, who has long been the Countess Orkney. *Punch* said of the entertainment: "'Dombey and Son' was reduced to Florence. Florence appeared as Captain Cuttle twice, and has now disappeared altogether." I don't understand what this means. But to resume. "As Cuttle he was very funny; he was the well-known pictorial Cuttle down to the ground, and so Phiz-ically he was 'Cuttle.'" Mr. Florence was a genial man and made himself very popular in the upper Bohemia of London. He died almost suddenly ten years after his sojourn in the Strand.

On his visit to America "Charles Dickens," said the *Philadelphia Morning Post,* "while in this city, was very anxious to purchase Mr. James Hamilton's painting entitled 'What are the Wild Waves Saying?' But as this beautiful work, one of the artist's best, was already sold, Mr. Dickens requested that he might see the original sketch, with which he was so greatly pleased that he insisted upon buying it. Mr. Hamilton refused to sell the sketch, but presented it to Mr. Dickens. The other day, the artist received from Mr. Dickens an exquisite edition of his novels, accompanied by the following autograph: 'Gad's-Hill Place, Higham by Rochester, Kent,

Monday, Twenty-fifth May, 1868, to Mr. James Hamilton, this set of my books with thanks and regards.—Charles Dickens.'" It is certain that Charles Dickens's genius never suggested a more imaginative picture than this masterpiece, and his appreciation of James Hamilton could not have been more delicately shown.

"What are the Wild Waves Saying?" was written as a vocal duet by J. E. Carpenter, with music by Stephen Glover, who also composed an answer to it, called "A Voice from the Waves."

I note a drama called "Little Paul," by Walter Stephens (who dramatised "Edwin Drood" and other Dickens books), produced at the Lyceum Theatre, Rochester, March 6th, 1871.

"Heart's Delight" was revived at the Crystal Palace, November 11th, 1882, supported as below:

Mr. Dombey	Mr. Stewart Dawson.
Captain Cuttle	Mr. E. D. Lyons.
Sol, Gills	Mr. Laurence Grey.
Toots	Mr. Arthur Williams.
Walter Gay	Mr. H. Reeves Smith.
Carker	Mr. E. F. Edgar.
Jack Bunsby	Mr. Arthur Wood.
Florence Dombey	Miss Kate Rorke.
Edith	Miss Sophie Eyre.
Susan	Miss Nellie Bouverie.

Mention must be made of "The House of Dom-

bey," by Mrs. Teignmouth Shore and Mr. Walter Dexter, done at the Cripplegate Institute on November 3rd, 1905, with considerable success. Then, on October 24th, 1908, when quite another run on Dickens took place, Mr. Charles Cartwright produced "Dombey and Son" at the Theatre Royal, Bradford.

DOMBEY AND SON.

Captain Cuttle	Mr. Charles Cartwright.
Major Bagstock	Mr. Charles Collette.
Mr. Toots	Mr. A. B. Tapping.
Mr. Dombey	Mr. Arthur Royston.
Carker	Mr. M. A. Wetherell.
Walter	Mr. H. Warden.
Sol Gills	Mr. Edgar Coyne.
Rob the Grinder	Miss M. Sievier.
Native	Mr. C. Bigwood.
M. Blame	Mr. Letchworth.
Francois	Mr. Maclachan.
A Sailor	Mr. Ben Wood.
Mrs. Skewton	Miss Ada Palmer.
Florence Dombey	Miss May Yates.
Gipsy	Miss H. Francks.
Susan Nipper	Miss Joan Derry.
Edith Dombey	Miss E. Cartwright.

These "Cartwright" performances were admirable in every sense of the word.

"The Passing of Paul Dombey" was presented at the Borough Theatre, Stratford, April 22nd, 1910.

CHAPTER XIV

"DAVID COPPERFIELD"

CHARLES DICKENS confessed that this was his favourite amongst his own fictions—perhaps because there was so much of himself and of fact in it. "David Copperfield" has generally resolved itself into two classes of plays—one dealing with the Micawber incidents and the other the pathetically domestic, with Little Em'ly and the rugged Peggotty as a striking background. Thackeray, in his "Sketches and Travels in London," gives this most delightful eulogium of this really autobiographical novel. "'Have you read "David Copperfield," by the way?' says Brown in the Club Library. 'How beautiful it is—how charmingly fresh and simple! In those admirable touches of tender humour—and I shall call humour tender, Bob—a mixture of love and wit—who can equal this great genius? There are little words and phrases in his books to hold in the affections of man! What an awful responsibility there is hanging over a writer! What man holding such a place,

and knowing that his words go forth to vast congregations of mankind—to grown folks, to their children, and perhaps their children's children—but must think of his calling with a solemn and humble heart. May love and truth guide such a man always. It is an awful prayer; may heaven further its fulfilment.'" This was written over sixty years ago!

The eldest son of Charles Dickens wrote a few years since: "Of stage versions of 'Copperfield' there appear to have been only two of any importance; one by the customary John Brougham, which was played in America, and one by Andrew Halliday, which was first produced on the 9th October, 1869, by Mrs. Liston at the Olympic Theatre with great success. This version, which was called 'Little Em'ly' and was a remarkably good adaptation in itself, enjoyed the advantage of being excellently played by Sam Emery as Peggotty, Joseph Irving, a clever young actor of character parts, whose premature death was a great loss to the stage, as Uriah Heep; John Nelson as Ham; Miss Fanny Addison as Rosa Dartle, and Miss Ewell as Mrs. Gummidge, to mention only a few names of an unusually competent cast. The performance was thoroughly satisfactory to Charles Dickens, whose cordial and cheery congratulations to Andrew

Halliday I well remember hearing." I may add to this by stating that George Fawcett Rowe, who played Micawber to the life, was an Australian actor who made a considerable reputation in America. He was also a dramatist and wrote amongst other pieces "Freedom," which the late Sir Augustus Harris produced at Drury Lane Theatre, August 4th, 1883; but long previously to this, in 1877, in fact, he wrote a play called "Brass," with which he toured the country and also brought to the Haymarket, London, August 13th, 1877, after its initial production at the Alexandra Theatre, Liverpool, in the year named. He made his first mark in Australia as far back as 1854. In London his greatest hit was as Micawber in "Little Em'ly," where he was surrounded by a "galaxy of talent," as hereunder may be judged.

OLYMPIC THEATRE, OCTOBER 9TH, 1869.
"LITTLE EM'LY," BY ANDREW HALLIDAY.

PEGGOTTY	Mr. Sam Emery.
MICAWBER	Mr. Geo. F. Rowe.
URIAH HEEP	Mr. Joseph Irving.
WICKFIELD	Mr. W. Roberts.
TRADDLES	Mr. H. St. Maur.
STEERFORTH	Mr. Chas. Warner.
DAVID COPPERFIELD	Mr. H. Vaughan.
HAM	Mr. John Nelson.
LITTLE EM'LY	Miss Patty Josephs.
AGNES WICKFIELD	Miss Jessie Earle.

SCENE FROM "LITTLE EM'LY," AT THE OLYMPIC THEATRE, 1869.

[*To face p.* 234.

Mrs. Gummidge	.. ..	Miss Ewell.
Martha	.. ..	Miss Mattie Reinhardt.
Rosa Dartle ..	.. ..	Miss Fanny Addison.
Mrs. Micawber	.. ..	Miss Lee.
Betsey Trotwood	.. ..	Mrs. Poynter.
Peggotty Barkis	.. ..	Miss Griffith.

A little later, H. B. Conway played the part of David Copperfield. "Mr. Rowe's acting had much to do with the undoubted success that attended the production of Mr. Andrew Halliday's adaptation of 'David Copperfield,' called 'Little Em'ly.' The excellence of Miss Ernstone in the character of Martha on this occasion attracted the notice of Dickens himself, and he personally expressed his appreciation of it." This latter from Mr. T. Edgar Pemberton's book. I find more than one reference to Dickens's admiration for her conception of the part and his general appreciation of the whole production.

The eccentric character of Micawber has naturally been a very popular one with comedians. It has been quaintly played by Edward Terry at the Olympic, with Mr. E. W. Royce as Uriah Heep. This must have been in the late seventies or early eighties. Mr. Terry has also played Peggotty here. Mr. Terry has also ever been great as Serjeant Buzfuz at benefit matinees. Charles Collette, who had a play practically written round Micawber with which he

toured the provinces also did a season with it at the old Imperial Theatre, Westminster. David Fisher, James Fernandez, and the late Joseph Eldred, who was a trifle Micawberish in his make-up off the stage himself have all excelled in the part. Who that knew him does not remember Joseph Eldred and his marvellous cuffs? In a short account of his life in "The Dramatic List" it is stated that when the Olympic Theatre was opened in October, 1869, with "Little Em'ly" "Mr. Eldred appeared as Micawber," which is not correct—he did not act the part until 1873, and as already stated George Fawcett Rowe was the original. When the piece was revived in 1873—March 13th—Mr. Eldred played Mr. Micawber, and Sam Emery, Dan'l Peggotty again; William Rignold, Ham; H. B. Conway, David Copperfield; C. Peveril, Steerforth; George Canninge, Traddles; Mr. Graeme, Mr. Wickfield; Arthur Wood, Uriah Heep; Miss Marie Dalton, Little Em'ly; Miss C. Brabant, Agnes Wickfield; Miss Griffith, Peggotty Barkis; Miss Davis, Mrs. Gummidge; Miss Kate Rivers, Martha; Miss Fanny Addison, Rosa Dartle; Miss Jane Baker, Mrs. Micawber; and Miss Kate Manor, Betsey Trotwood. And of all this cast only one member is still alive—Mr. George Canninge. Two years later—October 30th, 1875, the drama

was again revived—this time at the Adelphi—with Sam Emery in his old character; W. MacIntyre, Ham; H. Vaughan (his original part), David Copperfield; Steerforth, Philip Day; Traddles, Walter Everard; Mr. Wickfield, H. Cooper; Uriah Heep, John Clarke; and Mr. Micawber, James Fernandez. Charming Lydia Foote—what an actress she was!—as Little Em'ly, and Cicely Nott as Mrs. Micawber, and Harriet Coveney, Betsey Trotwood. Mr. James Fawn, it may be noted, was playing in the farces—the performances at the theatres in 1875 began at seven o'clock sharp—not 8.30 as now—and the admission to the gallery was—sixpence!

John Brougham's adaptation was presented at his own Lyceum Theatre, New York, January 6th, 1851, with a comprehensive American cast. It was called "David Copperfield," and Mr. Brougham played Micawber.

There is one other play that owes its life to "David Copperfield"—indeed I have seen it referred to as being one of the best versions, of certain portions, that has been done—and that is the "Deal Boatman," by F. C. Burnand, first produced at Drury Lane Theatre, September 21st, 1863. It is true that the scene is laid at Deal, but Jacob Vance is twin brother to Peggotty, Mary Vance is half-sister to Little Em'ly, and Matt Bramber is Ham.

For the rest the story is practically the same except that the end is different, and all is well. All the same, it is a good two-act drama. Clement Scott wrote, long after the event, "This was spoken of as creditable to Mr. Burnand, it being his first attempt at serious dramatic composition." George Belmore was the Jacob Vance—a sort of Robsonian character—G. Weston, Matt Bramber; F. Charles, Edward Leslie; George Barrett, Sir John Haughton; Mrs. Edmund Falconer was Mrs. Bridgitt, and Miss Rose Leclercq, Mary Vance. The piece was decidedly popular, and after the Drury Lane season George Belmore went to the City of London Theatre with the "Deal Boatman" for a month. In later years it was revived at the Adelphi, and also Sadler's Wells.

To go back a bit. At the Strand Theatre, October 29th, 1850, George Almar's adaptation was acted under the title of "Born with a Caul; or, the Personal Adventures of David Copperfield."

David Copperfield	Mr. H. Butler.
Steerforth	Mr. Basil Potter.
Peggotty	Mr. James Johnstone.
Ham	Mr. Fortescue.
Murdstone	Mr. J. W. Simpson.
Hurricane Flash	Mr. George Almar.
Wickfield	Mr. Rogerson.
Richard Babberley	Mr. Yarnold.
Uriah Heep and Miss Mowcher	Mr. W. Atwood.

Micawber	Mr. H. J. Turner.
Betsey Trotwood	Mrs. Griffiths.
Rosa Dartle	Miss Elphick.
Agnes	Miss Egan.
Emily (*sic*)	Miss Love.
Mrs. Micawber	Miss Staylin.
Martha	Miss I. Simpson
Dora	Miss Manners.

Then at the Surrey, on the 18th of the next month (also at the Standard), "David Copperfield" with this cast was performed—

David Copperfield	Mr. W. Montague.
Murdstone	Mr. Charles Brille.
Mr. Dick	Mr. Fitz Roy.
Traddles	Mr. John Parry.
Peggotty	Mr. Thomas Mead.
Ham	Mr. J. W. Collier.
Uriah Heep	Mr. Bruce Norton.
Micawber and Miss Mowcher	Mr. Henry Widdicombe.
Steerforth	Mr. A. Raymond.
Wickfield	Mr. Fenton.
Betsey Trotwood	Mrs. Johnstone.
Agnes	Miss Jane Coveney.
Emily (*sic*)	Miss Harriett Coveney.
Mrs. Barkis (*sic*)	Miss La Porte.

I give these and the many other casts before they are altogether lost to the theatrical world.

Speaking of these theatrical annexations from "David Copperfield," Theodore Taylor said, in 1870, in his "Life of Dickens"—the first to appear —"But the most successful of all was 'The Deal

Boatman,' at Drury Lane Theatre two or three years since, in two acts, by Mr. Burnand," which quite bears out what I have already said.

At the Grecian Theatre on October 3rd, 1870, "David Copperfield," announced as an American dramatisation, was served up in two acts for the inhabitants of the City Road and neighbourhood. Then at the Theatre Royal, Brighton "The Ark on the Sands," by Charles Rennell, was acted September 19th of the same year. "Little Em'ly's Trials," by E. H. Brooke, was done at Sadler's Wells, March 4th, 1871, and on March 8th, 1873, "Lost Em'ly," by Murray Wood, was presented with Miss Virginia Blackwood in the title *rôle* at the Surrey Theatre.

"Em'ly," by George Hamilton, was played at the Albion Theatre, April 30th, 1877, after which we must make a jump to 1880 when "Little Em'ly" was revived at the Standard Theatre on March 2nd, and played by Messrs. John and Richard Douglas's Stock Company. In this, Mr. Charles Collette took Mr. Micawber under his wing, with William MacIntyre as Peggotty; Charles Swan as Uriah Heep, and Misses Stella Brereton and Amy Steinberg as Little Em'ly and Martha. Afterwards the whole company went to the Park Theatre, Camden Town, a very popular house at one time. Charles Collette, in the spring of 1881, went on tour with a special

company including the above ladies, W. MacIntyre and J. G. Taylor, and Miss Fanny Addison as Rosa Dartle. Then the indefatigable Charles Collette arranged a comic drama in five scenes which he christened "Micawber," and travelled through the provinces with it. This piece he brought to London and put it on at the Imperial Theatre, Westminster, in May, 1881.

A very capable combination of comedians next ventured a David Copperfield play—this, I fancy, was Andrew Halliday's "Little Em'ly" from the Olympic.

David Copperfield	Mr. H. Reeves Smith.
Traddles	Mr. John Willes.
Peggotty	Mr. E. D. Lyons.
Ham	Mr. Joseph Carne.
Micawber	Mr. Arthur Wood.
Uriah Heep	Mr. Arthur Williams.
Steerforth	Mr. J. A. Rosier.
Wickfield	Mr. Burgoyne.
Little Em'ly	Miss Kate Rorke.
Agnes	Miss Julia Roselle.
Martha	Miss Winifred Emery.
Rosa Dartle	Miss Sophie Eyre.
Mrs. Micawber	Miss Nellie Bouverie.
Mrs. Gummidge	Miss Ada Mellon.
Betsey Trotwood	Mrs. Stephenson.
Clara Peggotty	Miss B. Stannard.

This was done at the Crystal Palace, November 7th, 1882.

"Em'ly, or the Ark on the Sands," was another piece quite different from the one by Charles Rennell already mentioned, which had its initial performance at the Queen's Theatre, Manchester, March 10th, 1884.

In 1884, by the way, Mr. Fred Storey, the finest Rip Van Winkle since Jefferson, went on tour with a Dickens repertoire company, and undertook such characters as Dick Swiveller, Tackleton, The Dodger, Squeers, and Micawber.

Then for a few years comes a rest—in London, at any rate, but on August 1st, 1903, the management of the Adelphi put on "Em'ly," an adaptation of Charles Dickens's novel "David Copperfield" in four acts, by T. Gideon Warren and Ben Landeck.

Daniel Peggotty	Mr. Charles Cartwright.
Ham	Mr. Frank Cooper.
Steerforth	Mr. Ben Webster.
David Copperfield	Mr. Barrington Foote.
Uriah Heep	Mr. Robb Harwood.
Mr. Wickfield	Mr. Allen Thomas.
Littimer	Mr. Philip Darwin.
Micawber	Mr. Harry Nicholls.
Mrs. Steerforth	Miss Kimberley.
Rosa Dartle	Miss Nancy Price.
Clara Peggotty	Miss Bessie Harrison.
Mrs. Gummidge	Miss Caroline Ewell.
Martha	Miss May Munden.
Agnes Wickfield	Miss Maude Danks.
Betsey Trotwood	Miss Agnes Thomas.
Little Em'ly	Miss Madge Lessing.

Unfortunately this did not have a very long run, but, apparently undaunted, Mr. Charles Cartwright tried another version, this time by Mr. H. Kellett Chambers, and entitled "Dan'l Peggotty," at the King's Theatre, Hammersmith, March 11th, 1907. In the cast were Messrs. Charles Cartwright, Lionel Belmore, Gerald Lawrence, Stanley Harrison, Charles Collette, A. B. Tapping, J. D. Ross, and G. De Lara. Mesdames E. Sarjient, C. Selwynne, Helen Vicary, G. Walker, Nell Douglas, B. Grosvenor, L. Cavanagh and Ethel Ward.

This company went into the country with one or two changes, for instance Miss Edith Cartwright played Rosa.

In November of the same year, Mr. Collette, still playing Micawber, took charge of the company when he assigned the part of David Copperfield to a lady—for the first time, I believe—Miss Joan Derry, said to be the best boy impersonator on the stage. A condensed version of the drama, and entitled "Micawber," was produced by Mr. Collette at the County Theatre, Kingston, November 9th, 1908, which he has since played all round the provinces.

There was a rumour that "David Copperfield" was to be produced in French at the Odeon. M. Max Maurey, the director of the Grand Guignol, was travelling in Switzerland early in June, 1908,

reading "David Copperfield." "I was enjoying Dickens's work," said M. Maurey, "when I suddenly exclaimed half jokingly: 'What a glorious play one could make out of such a book.' 'All right,' returned Antoine, without even looking up from Marie Antoinette's 'Letters,' 'Write the play and I will bring it out next season at the Odeon,' and it was settled then and there." However, up to the present, the play has not been done in the French capital. But I have since learned from Mr. John N. Raphael that "David Copperfield" in ten tableaux really will be produced at the Odeon in May, 1911—perhaps before.

Mr. B. W. Matz has called my attention to the following astounding, if not paralysing announcement of an American play, which embellished the programme, sent him from Winnipeg. The play was performed at the Oliver Theatre, Lincoln, January, 1906. It is described as "A Great Scenic Melodrama," "A Hail Storm of Sensation," and "A Cyclone of Merriment." Mr. Matz, referring to it in the *Dickensian*, says, "It's title is 'What Women Will Do,' and it is written by Harry Jackson, whoever he may be. No one else is given any credit whatever for the production, although we find that the characters in it are Wilkins Micawber, Daniel Peggotty, *Hiram Peggotty*,

Uriah Heep, James Steerforth, David Copperfield, *Sheriff Dudley*, Em'ly, Rosa Dartle, *Mrs.* Peggotty, Mrs. Micawber, and Wilkins Micawber, junr. The synopsis of the story given follows, as such characters must, that of Dickens's book with 'Specialities,' introduced at a country dance and a scene in Em'ly's apartments in Paris. How Mrs. Peggotty is brought to life must be an American secret. The whole, on the face of it, suggests a 'penny plain and tuppenny coloured' melodrama of the direst pattern, and perhaps the author of it feels he cannot conscientiously associate Dickens with it. On the other hand, he may consider that it is all the fruit of his own brain and therefore ask, 'Why drag in Dickens?' which perhaps explains his ignoring him entirely."

The late Wilson Barrett also prepared a "David Copperfield" play, in which he purposed playing Ham, but his death in July, 1904, of course, put an end to all the preparations.

As recently as September, 1910, a Dutch version of David Copperfield was presented at Amsterdam. It was translated by Messrs. Schouwburg Stoel and Spree, and in it the twelve-year-old daughter of Heer Spree played David Copperfield; Tine V. d. Werf, Em'ly; Heer Marius Spree, Baas Peggotty; Heer Eylders, Ham, and Betsy Cremer, Clara Peggotty.

CHAPTER XV

"BLEAK HOUSE"

NATURALLY one would have thought that the dramatic consecutiveness and power of "Bleak House" would at once arrest the attention of the playwrights in 1852, when the story first began to appear, in the usual monthly numbers, in March, and continued until August, 1853. For in the very opening chapters there is a suggestion of strong human interest. And on the stage human interest is the *sine qua non*, if the great heart of the palpitating public is to be touched. Yet although the novel was highly popular, I have been unable to trace any adaptation of any importance until the year 1874, when, travelling, so to speak, to California, I find that Miss Jennie Lee, an English actress, chiefly known at the Strand Theatre, London as a "burlesque boy," was appearing as Jo in her husband's (J. P. Burnett's) adaptation of "Bleak House." In August, 1875, she returned with Mr. Burnett to London and played at the Surrey Theatre in the pantomime of "Jack the Giant Killer."

On November 8, "Jo" was, however, tried at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, Liverpool. Then at the Globe Theatre on Monday, February 21st, 1876, she enacted in London the title *rôle* "Jo" from Dickens's famous story. The *Athenæum* said that she acted the character with "a realism and a pathos difficult to surpass. A more striking revelation of talent has seldom been made. In get-up and in acting the character was thoroughly realised; and the hoarse voice, the slouching, dejected gait, and the movement as of some hunted animal, were admirably exhibited." The cast is well worth preserving—

JO

Sir Leicester Dedlock ..	Mr. E. Price.
Mr. Tulkinghorn	Mr. J. P. Flockton.
Mr. Snagsby	Mr. J. B. Rae.
Mr. Chadband	Mr. Charles Wilmot.
Mr. Guppy	Mr. Charles Steyne.
Mr. Bucket	Mr. J. P. Burnett.
Jo	Miss Jennie Lee.
Lady Dedlock	Miss Louise Hibbert.
Esther	Miss Nelly Harris.
Mrs. Rouncewell	Miss Robertson.
Jenny	Miss Vernon.
Rosa	Miss Norris.
Guster	Miss Kate Lee.
Mrs. Snagsby	Miss Steele.
Hortense	Miss Dolores Drummond.

This was a most excellent drama, though Mr. Charles Dickens the younger does not say much

about it. "This, if it did not in itself rise beyond the usual level of such things was remarkable for the thoroughly admirable and genuinely pathetic performance of Jo by Miss Jennie Lee, a performance which may take rank with the very best of the stage presentations of Dickens's characters; and by another excellent piece of work in the Hortense of Miss Dolores Drummond." As a matter of fact, this performance made Miss Drummond's reputation as an actress to be reckoned with, as she had then only been on the London boards two years. Mr. Charles Wilmot, who played Chadband, had only recently come to England from Melbourne, where he was highly respected as a clever actor and manager. He leased the Occidental Tavern in Fountain Court, Strand (Terry's Theatre now covers the site), which became quite the most popular theatrical rendezvous in town, and which, as the Coal Hole, had been the favourite haunt of the great Edmund Kean and many other theatrical celebrities. Thackeray refers to the Coal House under various names more than once in his many books.

"Jo" could only run a few weeks, as Miss Ada Cavendish was engaged by the lessee, Francis Fairlie, to appear in a new drama by Wilkie Collins, called "Miss Gwilt," on Easter Monday, April 17th. But 'Jo" was in the bills again in the following

MISS JENNIE LEE AS JO IN "BLEAK HOUSE," AT THE GLOBE THEATRE, 1876.

From a Drawing by Fred Barnard.

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September with an altered cast, and it was also revived at the Strand Theatre in April, 1885, after Miss Lee's extended Australian tour. Of this revival Clement Scott said "Jennie Lee was, perhaps, the very best Jo that has ever appeared on the stage. She was so full of humanity, and a quaint pathos, that few could equal. In this production, the other characters that deserve mention were the Mr. Tulkinghorn of Leslie Corcoran; Mr. Chadband of Mr. Charles Wilmot, Mr. Guppy of Gerald Moore, Lady Dedlock of Ada Ward, Esther of Florence Rayburn, Mrs. Snagsby of Mrs. C. H. Stephenson, and the Hortense of Dolores Drummond."

On March 27th, 1876, "Bleak House; or, 'Poor Jo,'" a drama in four acts, by George Lander, was first performed at the Pavilion Theatre, in which J. B. Howe took Jo, and Arthur Williams, Guppy. Mr. English was the Chadband; F. Thomas, Bucket; George Yates, Tulkinghorn. Miss Harriett Clifton was the Hortense, and Miss M. Foster, Lady Dedlock.

About this time another version was given at the Surrey Theatre by Terry Hurst, called simply "Poor Jo," and, curiously enough, in September, 1876, at the same house, appeared a musical farce in one act by Frank W. Green and Oswald Allan, entitled "Jo *v.* Jo," but whether in any way connected with "Bleak House" I am unable to say.

I should think not. At the Theatre Royal, Greenwich, on April 24th of the same year, there was done "Joe, the Waif," a drama by Herbert Rhoyds.

In the country, at the Alexandra Opera House, Sheffield, April 28th the same year, I note "Bleak House; or Poor Jo," by Miss Eliza Thorne. At the Park Theatre, Camden Town "Poor Little Jo" made an effective appeal, July 2nd, 1877. This I am under the impression was by G. Murray Wood, for Miss Virginia Blackwood undertook the part of Jo. In fact it rained "Bleak House" in various ways through the success of the piece at the Globe. "Poor Jo," a drama by H. Davenport, was produced at the Theatre Royal, Southampton, February 25th, 1878. Mr. Edward Compton had a version also in which he played Bucket. In July, 1892, Mr. James Mortimer brought to the Lyric, London, for a *matinée* "Move on; or, Jo the Outcast," originally produced several years previously in Hull and now re-christened simply "Jo." This was rather a series of tableaux, illustrating various episodes in the lives of the principal characters of the story, than a well-constructed drama. The cast was really excellent, and Lydia Cowell was a truly pathetic and moving Jo; Maud Milton, proud and stately as Lady Dedlock, while Adrienne Dairolles was well fitted with the part of Hortense. As Guster, Louisa

Gourlay was distinctly humorous, and Fanny Robertson an impressive Mrs. Rouncewell. Henry Bedford was a capable Bucket; E. Giradot was capital as Mr. Tulkinghorn; Henry Crisp was a good Chadband, while James Welch shone as Guppy, together with Charles Dodsworth as Snagsby, and Sir Leicester Dedlock was represented by Lawrence D'Orsay.

This same play as "Move on; or, the Crossing Sweeper," was previously done in London at the Grand Theatre Islington, September 1st, 1883. The cast was exceptionally strong, and the piece enjoyed a considerable reputation in the provinces. Mr. Mortimer attached to each of the dramatis personæ a characteristic description taken from Dickens.

Sir Leicester Dedlock ..	Mr. Frank Stephenson.
Bucket	Mr. R. C. Lyons.
Mr. Tulkinghorn	Mr. J. Hastings Batson.
Guppy	Mr. F. Manning.
Mr. Snagsby	Mr. Victor Liston
Jo	Miss Lydia Cowell.
The Rev. Mr. Chadband ..	Mr. G. P. Carey.
Krook	Mr. James O'Brien.
The Coroner	Mr. W. E. Lane.
Constable	Mr. James.
Servant	Mr. H. Eastland.
The Beadle	Mr. J. C. Howard.
Lady Dedlock	Miss Helen Massey.
Mdlle. Hortense	Miss Dolores Drummond.
Esther Summerson	Miss Lilian Dudley.

Rosa	Miss Kate O'Brien.
Mrs. Snagsby	Miss B. Lorimer.
Guster	Miss Alice Charteris.
Mrs. Rouncewell	Miss Annie Brophy.
Mrs. Piper	Miss Hastings.

The Grand was quite a new theatre—soon to be burnt to the ground and rebuilt. To go back a bit. "Jo, the Waif; or, the mystery of Chesney Wood," began a tour at the Rotunda Theatre, Liverpool, July, 1881. The author's name was not given. After this there appeared "Lady Dedlock's Secret," by J. Palgrave Simpson, first produced at the Opera House, Aberdeen, April 3rd, 1874, then by amateurs at the Theatre Royal Windsor, November 28th, 1883, and then at the Opera Comique, March 26th, 1884. Mr. Charles Dickens the younger thought proper to write of this production as follows:—

"The liberties which Mr. Palgrave Simpson allowed himself to take with his author were really unjustifiable even in a play which was described as being founded on an episode in Charles Dickens's 'Bleak House.' It is, perhaps, excusable that Krook should have murdered Mr. Tulkinghorn and have been denounced by Jo, who was a witness of the transaction, also that Jo should, among many other remarkable figures of speech, describe Lady Dedlock as saying that she was a servant though not with manners to conform. But the

conclusion of the play in which Lady Dedlock (out of her mind) is escorted back to Chesney Wood by Jo, and has a regular conventional knockabout stage death scene, while Jo—who like Tiny Tim does not die—weeps by her side, to form a picture, is a little too much. Mr. Palgrave Simpson proved himself on so many other occasions so adroit a hand at dramatic cookery, that it is surprising that he should have concocted such a hash as this, while it is still more astonishing that anybody should have thought it worth serving up to the public."

That it was well acted the cast, which I give, will prove.

Sir Leicester Dedlock ..	Mr. C. W. Somerset.
Tulkinghorn	Mr. Robert Pateman.
Jarndyce	Mr. Cecil Crofton.
Guppy	Mr. Ernest Hendrie.
Krook	Mr. Henry Kemble.
Bucket	Mr. Howard Russell.
Jo	Mr. Charles Coote.
Higginson	Mr. Walton.
Scroggs	Mr. Clinch.
Lady Dedlock	Lady Monckton.
Esther Summerson	Miss Dorothy Dene.

In any case the piece was a fair success with theatre-goers. Lady Monckton, who had long been favourably known as an experienced amateur, made on this occasion her professional *début*. Afterwards she went to the Haymarket Theatre to play

Mrs. Ralston in "Jim the Penman" under the management of Sir (then Mr.) Herbert Beerbohm Tree.

Mr. J. P. Burnett's "Jo" was revived at Drury Lane Theatre, May 13th, 1896, when Miss Jennie Lee reappeared in her old part of the Crossing Sweeper. Of this performance Mr. William Archer wrote: "It is a remarkable piece of acting and very genuinely Dickens-ish. Of course it has not gained in freshness or spontaneity; but I saw it again with pleasure and fully understood its abiding popularity. . . . There is something refreshing in an occasional plunge into Dickens, even in this violently condensed form." Playing in this revival were Mr. Rudge Harding as Sir Leicester Dedlock; Mr. Howard Russell, Mr. Tulkinghorn; Mr. Alfred Balfour, Snagsby; Mr. Robb Harwood, Chadband; Mr. Charles Stuart, Guppy; and Mr. Frank Mac-Vicars, Bucket; Miss Alma Stanley, Lady Dedlock; Miss Ada Lee, Hortense; Miss Joan Burnett, Esther; Miss Fanny Robertson, Mrs. Rouncewell; Miss Kathleen Gordon, Rosa; Miss Katie Lee, Guster; Miss Mary Bates, Jenny; Mrs. Vernon Paget, Mrs. Snagsby; and Miss Jennie Lee, the never-to-be-forgotten Jo.

The last important performance of "Bleak House" was so named, with the sub-title of, "Or

Events in the life of Jo." A version by Oswald Brand, produced at the Grand Theatre, Islington, June 1st, 1903.

Sir Leicester Dedlock, Bart.	Mr. Leonard Yorke.
Mr. Bucket	Mr. W. R. Sutherland.
Mr. Jarndyce	Mr. Lawrence Derrick.
Mr. Tulkinghorn	Mr. Fred Allen.
Richard Carston	Mr. L. Griffin.
Guppy	Mr. J. F. Elliston.
Jobling	Mr. E. Davey.
Turveydrop	Mr. A. Hemsley.
Mr. Snagsby	Mr. J. W. Bradbury.
Mr. Chadband	Mr. Hal Collier.
Sergeant George	Mr. E. Chandler.
A Constable	Mr. George Elliott
Lady Dedlock	Miss Helen Bancroft.
Jo	Miss Kate Brand.
Esther Summerson	Miss Winifred Leeson.
Ada Clare	Miss Dora Levis.
Mrs. Snagsby	Miss Ada Francis.
Miss Chadband	Miss Nellie Clarence.
Miss Jellyby	Miss Mary Hardacre.
Peepy	Little Sadie Gold.
Guster	Miss Montague.
A Servant	Miss Gibbons.
Hortense	Miss May Howard.

Mr. Oswald Brand, who was a most enterprising manager, died at the early age of fifty-two in August, 1908.

At the Margate Theatre on November 26th, 1903, yet another adaptation of the story was arranged by J. Stillwell and W. Benson.

CHAPTER XVI

"HARD TIMES"

I DON'T think that "Hard Times" was ever a really popular work. It is so full of the dark and hard side of life, and if it were not for the little humour introduced through Mr. Sleary, of the horse-riding circus there would be scarcely a gleam of sunshine in the whole book. Besides it was written with a deliberate object, as Dickens explained in a letter to Charles Knight, and which might fittingly have served as a warning preface of what was to come. But these things apart, there is real drama in the story, though seemingly it has not appealed very much to writers for the theatre. Coketown, the scene of the novel was intended for an outlying district of Manchester, which certainly is not the most cheerful city at the best of times.

"Hard Times," after running as a serial in "Household Words," came out in volume form in 1854, with a dedication to the Chelsea Sage, Thomas Carlyle. A critic, writing of it at the time, said,

"This work is treated differently to any of his other books, and hardly sustains his reputation, being the least read and admired of his numerous fictions. The plot is meagre and aimless. The persons are too often exaggerated and overdrawn; the design, apparently being to place facts, figures, science, and political economy in anything but a favourable or correct light. The education received by the Gradgrinds is preposterous." Ruskin, too, found fault with Dickens over his farcical treatment in characterisation of Bounderby and others of a serious subject.

An amusing parody or skit on the tale by Robert Brough appeared in "Our Miscellany," a work, the joint production of that gentleman and Edmund Yates, the founder of *The World*, weekly journal. At the Strand Theatre on August 14th, 1854, a version by Fox Cooper was placed on the stage, and was well received, all the melancholy parts being cut out, and all the humour heightened as much as possible; the *dénouement* being quite different from that to be found in Dickens! The new Bill for closing the public houses creating great excitement and discussion at that time, Mr. Gradgrind was made to exhibit strong animosity and hostility to the proposed measure. "Hard Times" was well cast.

HARD TIMES.

THOMAS GRADGRIND, ESQ. (*M.P. for the Borough of Coketown—"Inflexible, dry, and dictatorial; whose head had scarcely warehouse room for the hard facts stored inside"*)	Mr. R. Romer.
MR. JOSIAH BOUNDERBY (*"A man who was always proclaiming through a brassy speaking-trumpet sort of voice his old ignorance and his old poverty"*)	Mr. Barrett.
JAMES HARTHOUSE, ESQ. (*"A thorough gentleman, made to the model of the time—weary of everything, and putting no more faith in anything than Lucifer"*)	Mr. Belford.
STEPHEN BLACKPOOL (*"A good Power-loom Weaver, and a man of perfect integrity—one of the hands who has known a peck of troubles"*)	Mr. Herbert.
TOM GRADGRIND (*commonly called "the Whelp"*)	Master Gilbert.
(*Subsequently the "Fast Man" and "Roué"*) ..	Mr. John Howard.
BITZER (*"His skin was so unwholesomely deficient in the natural tinge, that he looked as though if he were cut he would bleed white"*) ..	Mr. Sidney.

SLEARY (*the manager of the Circus —"a man never sober, and yet never drunk"*)	Mr. Bernard.
DR. SOMERFORD	Mr. Douglas.
MRS. GRADGRIND (*"A thin, white, pink-eyed bundle of shawls—of surpassing feebleness, mental and bodily"*) ..	Mrs. Long.
SISSY JUPES	
(*"A bit of unsophisticated nature"*)	Miss R. Edouin.
(*In aftertime "Matured Friend and Commiserating Companion"*) ..	Miss Fanny Beaumont.
MRS. SPARSIT (*"Of the family of the 'Powlers,' who could trace themselves so exceedingly far back, that it was not surprising if they sometimes lost themselves"*) ..	Mrs. Laws.
RACHEL (*"The owner of a quiet oval face, dark and rather delicate, irradiated by a pair of very gentle eyes, and set off by the perfect order of her shining silky hair"*) ..	Miss Hammond.
MRS. PEGLER (*"A mysterious Old Woman, in a red cloak, who could stand outside the Bank for a whole day, from sunrise to sunset"*) ..	Mr. Courtney.
LOUISA GRADGRIND	
(*A child now*)	Miss Eliza Edouin.
(*But, at no distant day, a Woman all at once*) ..	Miss Harriett Gordon.

HANDS, SERVANTS, VILLAGERS, CONSTABLES, &c.

This version, which certainly is a bad one, and in which the most outrageous liberties are taken with the novel greatly incensed Charles Dickens the younger, and caused him to say some very bitter, but just things.

At Astley's, Westminster Bridge Road, on April 22nd, 1867, "Under the Earth; or, Sons of Toil," was given as a dramatic version of "Hard Times," though without any adapter's name. This reminds me that John Forster records that an American admirer accounted for the vivacity of the circus scenes by declaring that Dickens had "arranged with the master of Astley's Circus to spend many hours behind the scenes with the riders among the horses; a thing just as likely as that he went into training as a stroller to qualify for Mr. Crummles in 'Nickleby.'" Dickens was, of course, familiar with life behind and before the scenes of both theatres and circuses from early boyhood.

The cast of "Under the Earth," is interesting.

Josiah Bounderby	Mr. W. H. Stephens.
James Harthouse	Mr. T. W. Richardson.
Stephen Blackpool	Mr. James Fernandez.
Bitzer	Mr. Edward Atkins.
Thomas Gradgrind, M.P. ..	Mr. James Elphinstone.
Tom Gradgrind	Mr. W. Arthur.
Mrs. Sparsit	Miss A. Richardson.
Rachel	Miss Edith Stuart.

"Hard Times"

Louisa Gradgrind	.. ..	Miss Marion.
Mrs. Pegler	.. .. ..	Mrs. Caulfield.

This piece was, I now learn from Mr. W. H. C. Nation, dramatised and produced by himself.

"Mr. Gradgrind's System," was performed for the first time at the Prince's Theatre, Llandudno, July 3rd, 1906. It has not reached London yet.

CHAPTER XVII

"LITTLE DORRIT"

"I HAVE not been able to find any record of any dramatic version of 'Little Dorrit.' The boldest adapter might well shrink from the task of dramatising the Circumlocution office." That is not a very pleasant introduction, but that is what Charles Dickens's son cheerfully set down in his preface to the Macmillan Edition. However, the book was dramatised and presented at the Strand Theatre, November 13th, 1856. E. L. Blanchard said the performance was "very slow," while Theodore Taylor observed of the novel: "The work met with an immense sale in the serial form, but it is not now (1870) so popular as some of the other works of Mr. Dickens. The story was dramatised, and well represented at the Strand Theatre."

In the preface to the first bound edition of "Little Dorrit" in 1857, Charles Dickens wrote: "Some of my readers may have an interest in being informed whether or no any portions of the Marshalsea Prison are yet standing. I myself did

not know until I was approaching the end of this story, when I went back to look. I found the outer front courtyard, often mentioned here, metamorphosed into a butter shop; and I then gave up every brick of the jail as lost. Wandering, however, down a certain adjacent 'Angel Court, leading to Bermondsey,' I came to 'Marshalsea Place,' the houses in which I recognised, not only as the great block of the former prison, but as preserving the rooms that arose in my mind's eye when I became Little Dorrit's biographer. The smallest boy I ever conversed with, carrying the largest baby I ever saw, offered a supernaturally intelligent explanation of the locality in its old uses, and was very nearly correct. How this young Newton (for such I judge him to be) came by his information, I don't know; he was a quarter of a century too young to know anything about it himself. I pointed to the window where Little Dorrit was born, and where her father lived so long, and asked him what was the name of the lodger who tenanted that apartment at present. He said, 'Tom Pythick.' I asked him who was Tom Pythick? and he said, 'Joe Pythick's uncle!'"

A newspaper note in January, 1902, stated that "Little Dorrit's playground, which has just been opened for children, recalls inevitably the old

Marshalsea, and all it meant in the life of Dickens and his characters. The building that Little Dorrit knew, itself the successor of an earlier prison, which in Queen Elizabeth's time ranked next to the Tower, had in 1842 ceased to exist as a prison. Since then the felons' portion has disappeared. Thanks, however, to its utilisation for business purposes, the debtors' prison remains intact. The interior has been remodelled, but tablets have been placed in various parts to mark interesting spots referred to by Dickens." This part has been preserved and still remains untouched. Dickens, as is well known, incorporated much of his own early life experiences in connection with the Marshalsea Prison in "Little Dorrit." In the *Daily Chronicle* for December 1st, 1906, there appeared a "Chat with Little Dorrit," an aged lady who was supposed to be the original of Charles Dickens's touching portraiture, but it has been proved beyond doubt that the old dame—she lived at New Southgate—had in some way or the other misunderstood the facts, and her memory had played her false.

In the course of an interesting address, delivered at Liverpool in November, 1908, on books and art, Mr. G. Bernard Shaw said, "One of the greatest writers England ever produced was Charles Dickens, who had not yet been half enough read. One of

the greatest books ever written in the English language was 'Little Dorrit.'" I am afraid there are not many critical people who will subscribe to this opinion, although at the same time "Little Dorrit" is a great work, and full of real life and real character.

The notice of the Strand Theatre in *The Era* of Sunday, November 16th, 1856, gives the following account of "Little Dorrit." "The slight drawback that Mr. Dickens has not got more than halfway through his novel of 'Little Dorrit' has not in the slightest degree proved a barrier to the work being dramatised by the anticipating gentleman who has provided this theatre with his 'version' of the story. With that easy recklessness of adapters generally, and with sublime indifference to the original author's design which has before now called forth the severest sarcasms from the writer of 'Nicholas Nickleby,' we have the plot capriciously twisted, turned and terminated to suit this stage, and forestall the others, and the unfortunate victim is mutilated on the same principle as that adopted by the classical robber of antiquity and cut down Procrastes fashion to fit the place, the lopping off of a head or limb producing no remorse with the operator.

"The story as we have it in the drama is limited

to the incarceration of the 'Father of Marshalsea,' and the piece ends with the restoration of Mr. Dorrit to his property. As the novelist especially contrived to render his earlier chapters as undramatic as possible, it will be easily imagined that the adaptation of them to the stage has not imparted to the plot the spirit that is infused into the description rather than the incidents.

"The first act hangs fire very much, and the humour of the Circumlocution-office requires to be read, rather than represented, to make it intelligible, so that with the absence of strong dramatic situations and the retention of long undramatic speeches, there is a dearth of that excitement which is the means of sustaining, as well as creating, an interest in the progress of the plot. The circumscribed range of the story, as here told, even seems to have necessitated the constant reproduction of the same scenes, and thus the monotony is not even relieved by the variety of objects presented to the eye, which, on the special authority of Mr. Lindley Murray, is to be considered pleasing. The piece, however, has the recommendation of being well acted.

"Miss Emma Wilton, who plays Little Dorrit, exhibits no inconsiderable amount of talent, and her earnestness and pathos showed a power of

delineation that induces a belief in a longer professional career than her apparent youthfulness would suggest. Miss Cuthbert, with an utter abrogation of feminine attractions that of itself is creditable to the judgment of the actress, makes up an admirable Maggie, whose devotion to her 'little mawther' has been so well portrayed by the novelist. The nearest realisation of the portraits drawn by the author is given by Mr. Neville, whose very mannerism enables him to give a closer embodiment of Mr. Dorrit's peculiarities, whilst his dress is so exact that Mr. Hablôt K. Browne might have performed himself the office of costumier. The Tite Barnacle of Mr. Kinlock is another happy personation, from its being peculiarly suited to the actor's style. Mr. G. Lee caricatures honest John Chivery with the red nose, long-tailed coat, and limp hair, that have been the recognised properties of the 'comic lover' from time immemorial, and which have all the mouldiness of provincial antiquity about them, whilst Mr. J. Clarke stands prominently forth as rendering the steaming, snorting Pancks a vivid, life-like character. The rest present no claims to remark, and when it is added that each tableau is marked by melodramatic music to enable the audience to remember that the respective positions of the dramatis personæ are copied from

the monthly illustrations, and that a well-painted scene of Southwark Bridge is the only novelty of embellishment, we have said all that the public will care to know of the 'new and original' (!) drama of 'Little Dorrit' (*vide* play bill *passim*) produced on Monday night at the Strand."

A German theatrical craftsman has also taken the dramatisation of "Little Dorrit" in hand. I quote the following from the *Dickensian* of November, 1905.

"A German dramatised version of 'Little Dorrit,' by Herr Franz Schoenthan, under the title of 'Klein Dorrit,' a comedy in three acts, was presented on October 5th at the Imperial Hofburg Theatre in Vienna. It was excellently mounted, and well received, although apparently it was not a very adequate representation of the original story. The principal characters were sustained by Herr Thiemig and Fräulein Retty. It was stated that the play was to be produced simultaneously at forty theatres in Germany, Austria and Hungary." It was done at Berlin, September 15, 1906, with Herr Volmer as Old Dorrit, and Fraulein Eschborn as the heroine.

CHAPTER XVIII

"A TALE OF TWO CITIES"

THERE is a remarkable history attached both to the book and the plays dealing with this most beautiful story. John Forster wrote in regard to it, "The first notion occurred to him (Dickens) while acting with his friends and his children in the summer of 1857, in Mr. Wilkie Collins's drama of 'The Frozen Deep.'" But many things were disturbing Charles Dickens just then, and it was not until twelve months later that he set to work in earnest, and "A Tale of Two Cities" began to appear in *All the Year Round*, April 30th, 1859. This is an important date.

When Mr. Martin Harvey produced "The Only Way" at the Lyceum Theatre on February 16th, 1899, the old controversy that existed long ago was revived as to whether Dickens borrowed from Watts Phillips's "Dead Heart" or whether Watts Phillips was indebted to Dickens, or both to Dumas's "Chevalier de la Maison Rouge," which was produced in Paris some twelve years before either the

English play or the English book was born. The great act of self-sacrifice exhibited both by novelist and dramatist, almost simultaneously in their works, however, had been utilised even before Dumas by, amongst others, Edward Bulwer Lytton, in his extraordinary romance of "Zanoni"—of which more presently—so that on this point there is no need to dwell for the moment. Dickens's "Tale of Two Cities" first came out, as I have already stated, in *All the Year Round* in 1859 as a serial, beginning in the month of April; while the "Dead Heart" was produced at the Adelphi Theatre in the following November by Benjamin Webster, who had held the manuscript, however, of the play since the latter part of 1856.

According to the late John Coleman, Watts Phillips gave this version of the matter.

"My first play was 'The Dead Heart'; it was not only my first play, but the first play of mine which Webster accepted, although 'Joseph Chavigny' was the first play of mine he ever brought out. It was produced in the summer of '57. It was all Webster and Celeste." This piece was not a success.

"But," continued Watts Phillips, "I didn't believe in being beaten, so I set to work immediately on 'The Poor Stroller,' never ceasing, however, to

urge upon Webster the production of 'The Dead Heart.' From some unaccountable reason he still held off, so I thought I'd try Phelps. I described the play to him, and he offered to produce it if I could induce Webster to give it up. I then proposed to buy it back, but he would not hear of that, though he still persisted in postponing its production. To mollify me, he produced 'The Poor Stroller' at the beginning of '58. It was a *succès d'estime*, and that was all; my poor 'Dead Heart' was shelved for another year. Oh, that weary, weary waiting; I protest I can't think of it now without a shudder. Hope deferred maketh the heart grow sick, and I was sick, sore, sorry, and desperately hard up besides.

"Imagine if you can, then, my feelings when, in the middle of 1859, I read 'A Tale of Two Cities,' in *Household Words*. No, stay! It was then transmogrified into 'All the Year Round.' Three years and more I had awaited Webster's goodwill and pleasure, but now I raised Cain, until my poor play was put into rehearsal, and at length it was produced at the beginning of November, 1859."

After a night or two, the play roused the very heart of London, and an enormous success had been achieved. "But," adds John Coleman, "let me continue in my own way.

"Charles Dickens's story aroused great enthusiasm at the time of its publication and dramatisations began to spring up everywhere, directly its immensely human story began to develop, but not until the 'Dead Heart' had been done and had 'caught on.' In justice, therefore, to the memory of a brilliant dramatist who gave so many excellent plays to the English stage, it is only fair to emphasise exactly how matters stood at the time when party feeling ran very high as to the claims of Dickens and Phillips. As already indicated, Phillips was urging Webster to put on 'the Dead Heart' all through 1859 and for two years previously, and after he had 'almost renounced all hope he was overjoyed to learn that the manager had at last made up his mind to bring forward the piece.' This was decidedly owing to the serial issue of Dickens's story, which, to Phillips's annoyance, seemed to anticipate some of his situations. Then the dramatist grew happy and buoyant once more, and eagerly discussed by letter the casting of the play. The piece, excellently represented, was quite an unprecedented work."

The drama was produced at the Adelphi on November 10th, 1859. I give a copy of the programme:

THE DEAD HEART.

A DRAMA IN A PROLOGUE AND THREE ACTS.

BY WATTS PHILLIPS.

THE COUNT DE ST. VALERIE		Mr. John Billington.
THE ABBÉ LATOUR		Mr. David Fisher.
ROBERT LANDRY		Mr. Benjamin Webster.
JACQUES LE GRAND		Mr. Stuart.
REBOUL	(*artists and students*)	Mr. Paul Bedford.
MICHEL		Mr. W. H. Eburne.
JEAN		Mr. Moreland.
PIERRE		Mr. Conran.
TOUPET (*perruquier and coiffeur*)		Mr. J. L. Toole.
JOCRISSE (*owner of the cabaret "Les Trois Ecus"*) ..		Mr. C. J. Smith.
BAPTISTE DUVAL		Mr. Page.
FERBRAS (*a blacksmith*) ..		Mr. Aldridge.
BLAIREAN (*crier*)		Mr. R. Romer.
MARTINET (*officer of gendarmes*)		Mr. Howard.
CATHERINE DUVAL		Miss Woolgar.
CERISETTE		Miss Kate Kelly.
ROSE		Miss Laidlaw.

The majority of the critics praised the work, but there were several who alleged that Phillips was indebted for his main ideas to "Monte Cristo" and to "Maison Rouge," which he promptly denied. Moreover, the author knew only too well that when he was accused of purloining from Dickens, as speedily happened, he had a harder task to clear himself. Already in the June of 1859, when "A Tale of Two Cities" was being eagerly read, Phillips reproached Webster for delaying the production. "Of course they will make a play of Dickens's new

tale. . . . And now, owing to a delay of years, Dickens puts into words what I had hoped long ago to see put into action," wrote Phillips to Webster. There were several startling coincidences in the two works, but the part of the story in which Sydney Carton's heroic deed was described did not appear until after the play was produced. In February, 1860, after the piece had nearly reached its hundredth night, and after Tom Taylor's version, prepared with the assistance of Dickens himself, was done at the Lyceum as " A Tale of Two Cities," January 30th, 1860, Benjamin Webster had to protest again—having already defended Phillips from the charge of plagiarism on several occasions—and wound up his letter by saying, " It is also well known, and I can immediately prove it, that ' The Dead Heart ' was written and paid for years before ' A Tale of Two Cities,' or the periodical in which it appeared, was dreamed of." The dramatist went so far as to say that the piece was " seen by Dickens long ago." The writer of the " Life of Watts Phillips," published in 1891, says, " It seems that when he (W. P.) first sent the piece to Webster, the latter took it down to Brighton and there read it to two or three friends, one of whom was the novelist."

The closing scene of " The Dead Heart " in a degree is certainly to be found in Dumas's " Chevalier

de la Maison Rouge," and Carlyle describes a similar incident of self-sacrifice—a very natural one—in his "French Revolution." It can also be recognized, as I have previously said, in Lord Lytton's "Zanoni."

Mr. Justin Huntley McCarthy, at the time of the revival of "The Dead Heart" at the Lyceum Theatre, in 1889, wrote: "Much has been said about the resemblance between the sacrifice in 'The Dead Heart' and the sacrifice in 'A Tale of Two Cities.' I have not seen it pointed out anywhere that a very similar sacrifice is to be found in the end of Dumas the Elder's brilliant revolutionary play, 'Le Chevalier de la Maison Rouge,' which was first performed at the Theatre Historique on August 3rd, 1847—and some twelve years before 'The Dead Heart' was produced or 'A Tale of Two Cities' published."

As a matter of fact, I pointed this out myself in *The Era* many years ago. It is difficult, as John Coleman says, to realise that this coincidence should have escaped recognition in the very theatre where, six years *after* the production of Dumas's play, and exactly six years *before* the production of "The Dead Heart," Dion Boucicault's adaptation of the former work—"Genevieve; or, the Reign of Terror"—was made memorable by the genius of Madame

Celeste, Alfred Wigan, and Benjamin Webster in 1853.

John Coleman declares deliberately that "one thing is properly certain; it never could have escaped the eagle eye of the acute manager (Webster), inasmuch as he was himself the chivalrous Lorin who sacrifices his own life to save that of his friend. It is possible, and even probable, that it was owing to this remarkable coincidence that Webster postponed the production of 'The Dead Heart' for so long a period after he had bought it."

It has been suggested that Dumas himself was undoubtedly indebted to Lord Lytton's "Zanoni" for his idea in "Le Chevalier de la Maison Rouge," as that piece did not make its appearance until four years and eight months after the weird "Zanoni," which was published in January, 1842. Now, in the last chapter of the last book of Lord Lytton's work (the *donnée* of which is the Reign of Terror) occurs the sacrifice of the heroic precursor of Robert Landry and Sydney Carton. Zanoni's self-immolation, however, takes a nobler form, inasmuch as he lays down the gift of perpetual youth and immortal life to save the woman he loves from the guillotine.

But enough of "The Dead Heart" in which, however, Sir Henry Irving was magnificent in

the Lyceum revival, September 28th, 1889. As was anticipated, Charles Dickens's fascinating romance was dramatised at once, with and without the author's consent being obtained, and played at the minor houses.

The best version was that prepared by the skilful Tom Taylor, under the aegis of Charles Dickens, who "in the kindest manner superintended the production of the piece," and "A Tale of Two Cities" went into the evening bills at the Lyceum Theatre, then under the management of Madame Celeste, who had recently seceded from the Adelphi, January 18th, 1860. In the cast were Madame Celeste, Walter Lacy, Kate Saville, T. Lyon, James Vining, Fred Villiers, James Johnstone, Rouse, Forrester and Sam Johnson who, by the way, played in "The Only Way" at the same theatre, February 16th, 1899. The dance of the "Carmagnole," with the original music, formed a very effective tableau, and the trial of Darnay was also a faithful reproduction. John Coleman, who was present at the first night of "A Tale of Two Cities," gives his impressions thus: "It was an admirable production in all respects, both as to acting and mounting. Certain impersonations in this drama have not been excelled, perhaps not equalled, in our time—notably Madame Celeste's boy in the prologue and her

Madame Defarge in the play; the pathetic Lucy Manette of Miss Kate Saville; the Doctor Manette of James Vining; the sympathetic Sydney Carton of poor Fred Villiers, and the wonderful wicked Marquis of Walter Lacy. The two plays 'caught on,' and their resemblance to each other having attracted universal attention, society divided itself into two factions—the Celestites and Dickensites, the Websterites and the Phillipsites. Then came accusations and recriminations as to coincidences and plagiarisms, and bad blood arose on both sides." But, of course, each house benefited by the controversy.

On July 7th, 1860, another piece entitled "The Tale of Two Cities; or, the Incarcerated Victim of the Bastille," by Fox Cooper, was put on at the Victoria Theatre, in which there were no less than forty-two speaking parts. This was described as "An Historical drama in a prologue and four acts." In the cast were Messrs. Byefield, Alfred Raymond, W. H. Pitt, George Yarnold, J. Howard, and Mrs. Charles Boyce and Mrs. E. F. Saville. Speaking of this piece, Johnnie Gideon said, "In it three parts stood out most conspicuously. They were the Solomon Barsad of Jack Bradshaw, the Vengeance of F. Wilton and the Miss Pross of Mrs. Isaac Cohen, then Miss Fanny Harrison. The character

MADAME CELESTE AS MADAME DEFARGE IN "A TALE OF TWO CITIES," AT THE LYCEUM THEATRE, 1860.

[*To face p.* 278.

of Dr. Manette was taken without acknowledgment by Dickens from an old Ambigu drama by MM. Anicet Borgeois and Ferdinand Dugue, called 'La Bouquetiere des Innocents.'"

Another adaptation was prepared by an actor named H. J. Rivers, called "The Tale of Two Cities," to which I refer at the end of this chapter.

Tom Taylor's "Tale of Two Cities" was put on at the Grecian Theatre for a short run, December 9th, 1878. Mr. Frederick Dobell was the Marquis de St. Evremond, Mr. William James, Charles Darnay; Mr. A. Syms, Sydney Carton; Mr. H. Parker, Dr. Manette; Mr. E. Vincent, Ernest Defarge; Miss A. Denvil, Lucie Manette; Miss Mabel Verner, Therese De Farge; The Vengeance, Miss A. Reed; and Jerry Cruncher, Mr. Harry Nicholls, who, in his time, has played many Dickensian characters, such as Mr. Fang with Mr. J. L. Toole in "Oliver Twist," the Artful Dodger in the same play, Uriah Heep, Micawber and others.

At the Royal Mirror (late the Holborn) Theatre, Holborn, on October 18th, 1875, was produced "All for Her," by J. Palgrave Simpson and Herman C. Merivale, in which John Clayton, as the hero Hugh Trevor, achieved the greatest success of his artistic career.

As "All for Her" was never published, I give

the names of the players from the programme of the first night.

Lord Edendale	Mr. Crauford.
Colonel Damer	Mr. Ferrand.
Hugh Trevor	Mr. John Clayton.
Radford	Mr. Horace Wigan.
Lindsay	Mr. Laurence.
Morris	Mr. Henry.
Hamilton	Mr. Saunders.
Greystone	Mr. H. Leigh.
Officer	Mr. Harrison.
Crake	Mr. G. Yarnold.
Lady Marsden	Miss Rose Coghlan.
Mary Rivers	Miss Caroline Hill.

The Authors wish it to be known that the part of Hugh Trevor has been derived from the character of Sidney Carton in the "Tale of Two Cities," by the express permission of the late Charles Dickens.

That was the note on the programme. The piece, which "drew all London" for many months, was revived at the Court Theatre, April 12th, 1883, when John Clayton resumed his original part, supported by W. H. Brougham as Lord Edendale, Gilbert Farquhar as Colonel Damer, Mr. W. Macintosh as Radford, Mr. John Willes as Lindsay, Mr. T. Burnley, Crake, and Mr. Gilbert Trent as Greystone. Miss Marion Terry was Lady Marsden, and Miss Kate Rorke, Mary Rivers.

Edgar Pemberton, writing of the piece, says "the authors of 'All for Her' did not announce

their play as an adaptation of 'A Tale of Two Cities,' nor were they called upon to do so, but they made admirable use of the Carton episodes, and in doing so produced a work which was ungrudgingly acknowledged to be the most powerful that had been seen on the stage for some years." Mr. Pemberton, in his statement about the authors not announcing their play as being derived from Dickens's inspiration, as I have shown, is incorrect, though the "note" did not appear on the Court programme.

On February 7th, 1884, "A True Story Told in Two Cities," by Eliot Galer, was produced by him at the Royal Opera House, Leicester, and then "1790," a play in four acts, by Henry Hunt, taken from Charles Dickens's "Tale of Two Cities," was played at the Bath Saloon Theatre, Sheffield, on October 29th and November 1st, 1894.

Mr. Eliot Galer's play had a considerable run at Leicester and round the country at the time.

On January 2nd, 1893, T. Edgar Pemberton produced "Sydney Carton" in a prologue and four acts at the Theatre Royal, Norwich.

Perhaps it is not generally known that Dickens had thoughts of creating on the stage the character of Sydney Carton himself. He thus distinctly states the fact: "When I was acting with my

children and friends, in Mr. Wilkie Collins's drama of 'The Frozen Deep,' I first conceived the main idea of the story. A strong desire was upon me then to embody it in my own person; and I traced out in my fancy the state of mind of which it would necessitate the presentation to an observant spectator with particular care and interest." This character was of course Sydney Carton.

"As the idea became familiar to me," he continues, "it gradually shaped itself into its present form. Throughout its execution it had complete possession of me; I have so far verified what is done and suffered in these pages, as that I have certainly done and suffered it all myself."

He sent the proof sheets to his friend Regnier of the Theatre Française and wrote: "I should very much like to know what you think of its being dramatised for a French theatre." Regnier replied that, as he judged, such a play would be prohibited by the authorities. In one of his letters to Miss Mary Boyle, Dickens said: "I must say that I like my Carton, and I have a faint idea sometimes that if I had acted him, I could do something with his life and death."

Of course "The Only Way," by Freeman Wills and Frederick Langbridge, both clergymen, by the way, may be considered the last word in adaptations

as far as "A Tale of Two Cities" is concerned. Martin Harvey's splendid performance of Sydney Carton placed him at once in the front rank of romantic actors, his graceful bearing and musical voice greatly adding to his skill and popularity, while his charming wife Miss de Silva made a most admirable and touching Mimi.

As a matter of record I print the full cast.

THE ONLY WAY.

A Tale of Two Cities.

A Romantic play, in a Prologue and Four Acts. Adapted by Freeman Wills from Charles Dickens's Novel.
Produced at the Lyceum Theatre, on Thursday, February 16th, 1899.

Characters in the Prologue.

Jean Defarge	Mr. Holbrook Blinn.
Dr. Manette	Mr. Fred Everill.
Marquis de St. Evremonde	Mr. Acton Bond.
Vicomte de St. Evremonde	Mr. H. Nye Chart.
A Peasant	Mr. T. Arthur Jones.

Characters in the Play.

Sydney Carton	Mr. Martin Harvey.
Ernest Defarge	Mr. Holbrook Blinn.
Mr. Lorry	Mr. J. G. Taylor.
Mr. Stryver	Mr. Sam Johnson.
Dr. Manette	Mr. Fred Everill.
Charles Darnay	Mr. Herbert Sleath.
President	Mr. F. Tyars.
Public Prosecutor	Mr. Frank Vernon.
Comte de Fauchet	Mr. Ben Webster.

M. de Maury	Mr. Havard Arnold.
Marquis de Boulainvilliers	Mr. E. Eardley Howard.
Gabelle	Mr. Henson.
Barsad	Mr. A. Lingley.
First Citizen	Mr. Fredk. Powell.
Second Citizen	Mr. Hawley Francks.
First Juryman	Mr. Stone.
Second Juryman	Mr. Herbert Innes.
Lucy Manette	Miss Grace Warner.
The Vengeance	Miss Marriott.
A Citizeness	Miss Lizzie Webster.
Mimi	Miss de Silva.

Mr. Martin Harvey has played "The Only Way" throughout the country, and at the Prince of Wales's and Apollo Theatres, and while acting Sydney Carton at the Adelphi Theatre in July, 1907, "The Only Way" scored its thousandth representation. "Sydney Carton's Sacrifice" was the title of a sketch prepared by B. Soane Roby, and produced at the Camberwell Palace, January 28th, 1907.

On November 29th, 1909, Mr. Hayden Coffin produced a dramatic sketch called "Sydney Carton" at the Metropolitan Music Hall after which, admirably playing the title *rôle* himself, he presented it round the country, at the Empire, Leicester Square, and the Coronet Theatre, Notting Hill.

Here is a curious coincidence. Tom Taylor's "A Tale of Two Cities" was produced at the Lyceum Theatre, January 30th, 1860, Fox Cooper's "The Tale of Two Cities" was presented at the

MR. MARTIN HARVEY AS SYDNEY CARTON IN "THE ONLY WAY."

Design from Poster drawn by John Hassall, R.A. By permission of David Allen & Sons, Ltd.

[*To face p.* 284.

Victoria Theatre, July 7th, 1860. In between these two pieces Davidson the publisher issued "The Tale of Two Cities," by Henry J. Rivers, an actor, at the Olympic Theatre. This play is word for word, and scene for scene identical with the one by Fox Cooper. George Daniel, who writes an eulogistic preface to Rivers' piece, declares that the manuscript was in the hands of the printers "before Mr. Tom Taylor's tale unfolded itself at the Lyceum." Was Fox Cooper also Henry J. Rivers—or, what happened? I have never seen H. J. Rivers' name down as an author, while that of Fox Cooper is well known.

CHAPTER XIX

"GREAT EXPECTATIONS"

AS in the case of "A Tale of Two Cities," Dickens ran "Great Expectations," first of all through the columns of *All the Year Round*, commencing with the number for December 1st, 1860. It was then published in three volumes in 1861, with illustrations by Marcus Stone and a dedication to Chauncey Hare Townshend. Speaking of the tale when he began its composition, Dickens said, "I have made the opening, I hope in its general effect, very droll. I have put a child and a good-natured foolish man in relations that seem to me very funny. Of course I have got in the pivot on which the story will turn, too—and which, indeed, as you remember, was the grotesque tragi-comic conception that first encouraged me."

That curiously strange personage in the tale, Miss Havisham, is believed to have been drawn from a lady who lived near Hyde Park, and who was burnt to death in her house. "It is further conjectured," explains F. G. Kitton in his "Life of Dickens" that "for purposes of the story the

novelist partly availed himself of the wedding breakfast incident related in *Household Words*, in connection with an old and historic London tavern, known as 'Dirty Dick's' in Bishopsgate Street Without."

As already indicated, Dickens had a great admiration for the talents of J. L. Toole as an actor, and he was particularly anxious that he should play Joe Gargery in an adaptation of "Great Expectations" (a part that ultimately fell into the capable hands of Edward Righton), and after seeing and praising his excellent acting as Dick Dolland in H. J. Byron's "Uncle Dick's Darling" at the old Gaiety Theatre, Strand, December 13th, 1869, Dickens good-humouredly asked Toole if he thought it possible that the dramatist had ever heard of another warm-hearted "cheap-jack" whose name was Dr. Marigold?

It is well-known that Dickens highly approved of J. L. Toole's impersonations of his creations, and the novelist himself declared that all the time he was writing "Great Expectations" "he had the famous actor in his mind for the part of Joe Gargery." As a matter of fact, Dickens dramatised his own story—and this fact has only recently been discovered—and it was published in 1861 by J. Holsworth at the office of "All the Year Round," Wellington Street, Strand. "'Great Expectations.'

A Drama in Three Stages. Founded on, and compiled from, the story of that name. By Charles Dickens." It was entered at Stationer's Hall. The piece is most interesting but not dramatic, as there is scarcely any action. It opens, however, with great promise, and then resolves itself too much to mere narrations of scenes and incidents. In the last act there is much more movement, however. I believe a copy of this very rare play by Dickens is priced at thirty pounds.

"Great Expectations" was not acted in London until it was produced at the Court Theatre under the management of Mr. Edward Righton, May 29th, 1871, when a version was written by Mr. (now Sir) W. S. Gilbert.

Joe Gargery	Mr. Edward Righton.
Pip (*in Act I.*)	Miss Jessie Powell.
Pip (*in Acts II. and III.*) ..	Miss Maggie Brennan.
Magwitch	Mr. J. C. Cowper.
Orlick	Mr. William Belford.
Serjeant Druce	Mr. T. W. Edmonds.
Jaggers	Mr. John Clayton.
Herbert Pocket	Mr. R. Astley.
Serjeant Filch	Mr. C. Parry.
Clerk	Mr. Jarvis.
The Avenger	Master Edmonds.
Estella	Miss Eleanor Bufton.
Mrs. Gargery	Miss Manor.
Biddy	Miss Kate Bishop.

A year later, 1872, at Wallack's Theatre, New York, there was presented "My Unknown Friend,"

a drama in three acts by Shafto Scott, "being a dramatised version of the novel 'Great Expectations' by the late Charles Dickens."

GREAT EXPECTATIONS.

CHARACTERS IN ACT I.

PIP (*"My father's family name being Pirip, and my Christian name Philip, my infant tongue could make of both names nothing longer or more explicit than 'Pip'"*)	Miss Lewis.
SERGEANT BENSON (*"On the chase in the name of the Queen, and wanting a blacksmith"*)	Mr. Edwin.
ABEL MAGWITCH (*"A fearful man, all in coarse gray, with a great iron on his leg"*) ..	Mr. Parselle.
ORLICK (*"This man was dressed in coarse gray, too, and had a great iron on his leg—and was lame, and hoarse, and cold, and was everything that the other man was"*) ..	Mr. Arnott.
JOE GARGERY (*"Joe was a man with curls of flaxen hair on each side of his smooth face, and with eyes of such undecided blue, that they seemed almost to have got mixed with their own whites. He was a mild dear fellow—a sort of Hercules in strength, and also in weakness"*) ..	Mr. Clark.

MRS. JOE GARGERY (" *Was more than twenty years older than her brother Pip, and had established a great reputation with herself, and the neighbours, because she had brought him up 'by hand'* ") ...	Mrs. Sefton.

CHARACTERS IN ACTS II. AND III.

PIP (" *In the fourth year of his apprenticeship Pip was removed from his present sphere of life, and brought up as a gentleman—in a word, as a young fellow of 'Great Expectations'* ")	Mr. H. T. Montague.
JOE (" *Still like the steel hammer, that can crush a man or pat an egg-shell, in his combination of strength and gentleness* ")	Mr. Clark.
ORLICK (" *Joe's morose journeyman was a broad-shouldered, loose-limbed, swarthy fellow, of great strength, never in a hurry, and always slouching*")	Mr. Arnott.
THE STRANGER, otherwise MAGWITCH (" *He was a secret-looking man. His head was all on one side, and one of his eyes was always half shut, as if he were taking aim at something with an invisible gun*")	Mr. Parselle.
MR. JAGGERS (" *An attorney, with deep-set eyes, black dots of beard and whisker, and the smell of scented soap on his great hands* ")	Mr. Gilbert.

MR. HERBERT POCKET (*"The pale young gentleman, who had a free-and-easy way with him that was very taking"*)	Mr. Stevenson.
MRS. JOE GARGERY (*"Passion was no excuse for her; but it is undeniable that instead of lapsing into passion, she deliberately took extraordinary pains to force herself into it"*)	Mrs. Sefton.
ESTELLA (*"A beautiful young lady at Miss Havisham's, who was dreadfully proud"*)	Miss Burke.
BIDDY (*"She was not beautiful, and could not be like Estella; but she was pleasant, good, and sweet-tempered"*) ..	Miss Dyas.

I do not know who Shafto Scott was, but evidently an Irishman, judging from his uncommon Christian name.

On January 28th, 1892, "Pip's Patron," called a "dramatic version of Charles Dickens's novel," was acted at the Public Hall, Beccles, Mr. W. J. Rix being responsible for the adaptation.

Upon the authority of Mr. Edmund Yates, the "Great City," by Andrew Halliday, "was partly plagiarised from 'Great Expectations.'" It was produced at Drury Lane, April 23rd, 1867.

There is one story by Dickens which is a drama in itself—"Hunted Down"—which, I believe, has never been submitted for a theatrical audience's judgment.

CHAPTER XX

"OUR MUTUAL FRIEND"

IN his "Life" of Charles Dickens, Sir Frank T. Marzials says: "In 'Our Mutual Friend' he is not at his best. It is a strangely complicated story that seems to have some difficulty in unravelling itself: the story of a man who pretends to be dead in order that he may, under a changed name, investigate the character and eligibility of the young woman whom an erratic father has destined to be his bride. A golden-hearted old dust contractor, who hides a will that will give him all that erratic father's property and disinherit the man aforesaid, and who, to crown his virtues, pretends to be a miser in order to teach the young woman, also aforesaid, how bad it is to be mercenary, and to induce her to marry the unrecognised and seemingly penniless son; they marry accordingly, and the poor clerk turns out to be the original heir."

This is very crudely put, but to my mind there is plot enough to hand in the tale for any smart dramatist. Moreover, I can trace at least four

plays on the subject. The first was "The Golden Dustman," by H. B. Farnie, produced at Sadler's Wells, June 16th, 1866—with Charles Warner as Bradley Headstone the schoolmaster. It was afterwards given at Astley's Amphitheatre and at the Britannia Theatre with great success. Indeed, in these houses and later in the country, the piece was always well received, and became quite a stock play at the minor temples of the drama. "Our Mutual Friend" came out in monthly parts from May, 1864, until November, 1865.

Theodore Taylor, writing at a time when the work was, so to speak, red hot from the press, exclaimed: "The plot is most ingeniously constructed, and each character an elaborate and highly executed portrait, although, perhaps, occasionally verging on caricature. . . . Taken as a specimen of literary workmanship, it is his best production since 'David Copperfield,' but it is not so popular with readers."

The cast of the "Golden Dustman" is taken from the day bill of the time, Sadler's Wells, June 16th, 1866, under the management of Mr. W. H. C. Nation:

John Harmon	Mr. Thos. Swinbourne.
Rogue Riderhood	Mr. W. McIntyre.
Bradley Headstone	Mr. Charles Warner.
Silas Wegg	Mr. George Belmore.
Eugene Wrayburn	Mr. F. Barsby.

Mr. Boffin	Mr. Barrett.
Mr. Wilfer	Mr. W. H. Courtley.
Lizzie Hexham	Miss Ada Dyas.
Bella Wilfer	Miss Fanny Gwynne.
Lavinia Wilfer	Miss Ada Harland.
Mrs. Wilfer	Mrs. Poynter.
Mrs. Boffin	Mrs. Bishop.

Of this production, the late Joseph Knight in the *Sunday Times* wrote that it reflected "the highest credit on the discrimination and liberality of his (Mr. Nation's) management." During the same year, Mr. Nation transferred the play to Astley's Theatre with Mr. Edward Atkins as Bradley Headstone, and Mr. James Fernandez, Silas Wegg. The novel was also dramatised for the Britannia Theatre, as the "Dustman's Treasure," July 15th, 1866, with the following cast:—

Gaffer Hexham	Mr. W. R. Crauford.
Riderhood	Mr. Robert Bell.
John Harmon	Mr. T. G. Drummond.
Eugene Wrayburne	Mr. R. Leslie.
Mr. Boffin	Mr. J. Parry.
Headstone	Mr. W. Morton.
Silas Wegg	Mr. Joseph Reynolds.
Mr. Wilfer	Mr. W. Newham.
Mr. Venus	Mr. E. Harding.
Lizzie Hexham	Miss Sophie Miles.
Mrs. Boffin	Mrs. Newham.
Mrs. Wilfer	Mrs. Morton.
Bella Wilfer	Miss F. Jones.

Another version entitled "Found Drowned; or,

"Our Mutual Friend"

Our Mutual Friend," was played at the Opera Comique, December 26th, 1870, with the following cast:

John Harmon .. .. .. } Rogue Riderhood .. .. }	Mr. George F. Rowe.
Silas Wegg	Mr. W. MacIntyre.
Boffin	Mr. Sam Emery.
Bradley Headstone	Mr. John Nelson.
Lizzie Hexham	Miss Ernstone.
Charlie Hexham	Miss Emily Pitt.
Mrs. Boffin	Mrs. Manders.
Bella Wilfer	Miss Rose Lisle.
Lavinia	Miss Tilly Earle.
R. W.'s Better Half ..	Mrs. Holston.

This was by George Fawcett Rowe, in which, it will be seen, he took the characters of John Harmon and Rogue Riderhood. Mr. William MacIntyre, a very firm actor, who was great as Black Mullins, was a capable Silas Wegg; Mr. Sam Emery a droll Boffin; and John Nelson a powerful Bradley Headstone. Mr. Rowe afterwards appeared at the Haymarket in his own play of "Brass," already referred to, and at Drury Lane. He died September 4th, 1889, after a long and painful illness.

Another play founded on the book was performed at the Amphitheatre, Leeds, in 1867.

"THE GOLDEN DUSTMAN."

Bradley Headstone	Mr. Reginald Moore.
Eugene Wrayburn	Mr. George Stretton.
John Harmon	Mr. W. H. Sharpe.

Rogue Riderhood	Mr. Geo. Blythe.
Mr. Boffin	Mr. Harry Chester.
Silas Wegg	Mr. Arthur Williams.
Gaffer Hexham	Mr. Peter Bradley.
Mr. Venus	Mr. E. W. Garden.
Mr. Wilfer	Mr. Montague.
Lizzie Hexham	Miss Mattie Reinhardt.
Mrs. Boffin	Mrs. Lomax.
Bella Wilfer	Miss Bella Fossette.
Lavinia Wilfer	Miss Rosine Power.
Mrs. Wilfer	Mrs. G. Blythe.

When this was brought to London, and revived by Mr. William Holland at the Surrey Theatre in 1878, Mr. Arthur Williams was again the Silas Wegg.

It was during the writing of "Our Mutual Friend" that Charles Dickens met with two really serious mishaps, from which he never properly recovered. During the summer of 1864, and whilst on a trip to Paris, he had a sunstroke, which greatly alarmed his friends. For many hours he was in a state of collapse, but in due course recovered and returned home. On Saturday, June 10th, 1865, he wrote to John Forster: "I was in the terrific Staplehurst accident, yesterday, and worked for hours amongst the dying and the dead. I was in the carriage that did not go over, but went off the line, and hung over the bridge in an inexplicable manner. No mere words can describe the scene.

I am away to Gads." He felt the effects of this experience in the railway smash for a long time, and there is no doubt that "Our Mutual Friend" suffered in skill through his illness, for the book was thrown back more than once, and he had to postpone all work for a time. Dickens spoke thus of the accident in his "Postscript in lieu of Preface" (dated September 2nd, 1865), which accompanied the last number of the story: "On Friday, the ninth of June, in the present year, Mr. and Mrs. Boffin (in their manuscript dress of receiving Mr. and Mrs. Lammle at breakfast), were on the South Eastern Railway with me, in a terribly destructive accident. When I had done what I could to help others, I climbed back into my carriage—nearly turned over a viaduct, and caught aslant upon the turn—to extricate the worthy couple. They were much soiled, but otherwise unhurt. The same happy result attended Miss Bella Wilfer on her wedding-day and Mr. Riderhood inspecting Bradley Headstone's red neckerchief as he lay asleep. I remember with devout thankfulness that I can never be much nearer parting company with my readers for ever, than I was then, until there shall be written against my life the two words with which I have this day closed this book—The End."

CHAPTER THE LAST

"THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD"

WHEN Dickens started on his last task—the task that was never to be completed—he most emphatically stated that he was going to write the "mystery" of Edwin Drood and not the history. John Forster, in his "Life of Charles Dickens," explains that Dickens's fancy for the tale was expressed in a letter written in the middle of July, 1869. "What should you think of the idea of a story beginning this way: Two people, boy and girl, or very young, going apart from one another, pledged to be married after many years—at the end of the book. The interest to arise out of the tracing of their separate ways, and the impossibility of telling what will be done with that impending fate." This first thought was abandoned; but it left a strong influence on the tale as it was begun afterwards. "Edwin Drood" was originally to be published in twelve monthly parts with illustrations. Unfortunately it closed with number six only partly written. The story to me, in the opening

chapters, is not quite like the Dickens of say "David Copperfield." The old manner of using odd and out-of-the-way names was still followed, but the style of narrative is distinctly different—though the power and charm remain. Longfellow wrote, when the news of the death of the great novelist was flashed all over the world, "I hope his book is finished. It is certainly one of the most beautiful works, if not the most beautiful of all. It would be too sad to think the pen had fallen from his hand and left it incomplete."

But alas! it was left incomplete, and though many writers have tried to elucidate the mystery, nobody has done so, or ever will satisfactorily, for the simple reason that only Dickens himself knew how he intended to carry it through. A book was published a few years ago called "Clues to Dickens's 'Mystery of Edwin Drood,'" by Mr. J. Cuming Walters, but it was all conjecture, of course.

Mr. Andrew Lang and Mr. William Archer among other clever writers took the matter up and gave their opinions on the subject in the newspapers, the former replying to Mr. Cuming Walters in a small book entitled "The Puzzle of Dickens's Lost Plot." Mr. Comyns Carr definitely planned, as far as he himself is concerned, a more or less decisive

conclusion in his dramatic version—not the first naturally that has been presented. This Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree first produced at Cardiff, November 21st, 1907, and later at His Majesty's Theatre, January 4th, 1908.

Before giving John Forster's version of what Dickens really had in his mind in regard to the development of the "mystery," I may state that there were many "endings" supplied by American and other writers at the time of the novelist's death. Here is a list of works that were issued in the States from 1870 until 1878, "The Cloven Foot; being an adaptation of the English novel, 'The Mystery of Edwin Drood,' to American scenes, characters, customs, and nomenclature," by Orpheus C. Kerr: New York, 1870.

"The Mystery of Mr. E. Drood," by Orpheus C. Kerr. The *Piccadilly Annual*, December, 1870. This was evidently brought out in book form later, for we find a work with the same title, called "An Adaptation." "O. C. Kerr" was generally considered to be a humorist—he certainly perpetrated several small works of a quaint, half-philosophical nature—though we do not appreciate the idea of burlesquing a dead writer's unfinished tragedy.

"John Jasper's Secret; A sequel to Charles

"The Mystery of Edwin Drood"

Dickens's unfinished novel, 'The Mystery of Edwin Drood.'" This was issued in 1871, from a Philadelphia firm. Next we have "The Mystery of Edwin Drood, Part the Second, by the Spirit Pen of Charles Dickens, etc." Brattleboro, 1873. If the author of this last perpetration knew how Dickens laughed Spiritualism, particularly the American brand, to scorn in the pages of *Household Words*, he would have saved himself the trouble he must have taken over this concoction. Finally we have, "A Great Mystery Solved; being a sequel to "The Mystery of Edwin Drood," by Gillan Vase. Three volumes. London, 1878, which is perhaps the best of the series. All these were, of course, unauthorised, it having been distinctly stated by Messrs. Chapman and Hall, in a letter to the *Times* in the summer of 1870, which I quote, that the book would remain unfinished.

"Sir,—"We find that erroneous reports are in circulation respecting 'The Mystery of Edwin Drood,' the novel on which Mr. Dickens was at work when he died. It has been suggested that the tale is to be finished by other hands. We hope you will allow us to state in your columns that Mr. Dickens has left three numbers complete, in addition to those already published, this being one-half of

the story as it was intended to be written. These numbers will be published, and the fragment will so remain. No other writer could be permitted by us to complete the work which Mr. Dickens has left."

Although Wilkie Collins was very angry with John Forster for the way in which he prepared and wrote his "Life of Charles Dickens," yet we must remember that the two men were inseparable friends, and the Master almost invariably consulted Forster in his labours and frequently divulged his plots as he saw them in their chrysalis state and as they grew.

Forster says, speaking of the last novel, "I first heard of the later design (of the story) in a letter dated 'Friday, the 6th August 1869,' in which, speaking with the usual unstinted praise he bestowed always on what moved him in others, of a little tale he had received for his journal, he spoke of the change that had occurred to him for the new tale by himself. 'I laid aside the fancy I told you of, and have a very curious and new idea for my new story. Not a communicable idea (or the interest of the book would be gone), but a very strong one, though difficult to work."

"The story," adds Forster, "I learnt immediately afterward was to be that of the murder

of a nephew by his uncle, the originality of which was to consist in the review of the murderer's career by himself at the close, when its temptations were to be dwelt upon as if, not the culprit, but some other man were the tempted. . . . The last chapters were to be written in the condemned cell, to which his wickedness, all elaborately elicited from him as if told of another, had brought him. Discovery of the murderer, of the utter uselessness of the murder for its object, was to follow hard upon the commission of the deed ; but all discovery of the murder was to be baffled till towards the close, when by means of a gold ring, which had resisted the corrosive effects of lime into which he had thrown the body, not only the person murdered was to be identified, but the locality of the crime, and the man who committed it."

It will be recollected that the ring taken by Edwin Drood to be given to his betrothed only if their engagement went on, was brought away by him at their last interview. Rosa was to marry Tartar, and Crisparkle the sister of Landless, who was himself, it is conjectured, to have perished in assisting Tartar to finally unmask and seize the culprit.

It is curious to note that in drawing up the agreement for publication of the novel, Mr. Ouvry, his solicitor, had, by Dickens's wish, inserted a

clause, thought to be needless, but found to be sadly prophetic and pertinent. It was the first time such a clause had been added to any one of his agreements :—

"That if the said Charles Dickens shall die during the composition of the said work of *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, or shall otherwise become incapable of completing the said work for publication in twelve monthly parts as agreed, it shall be referred to John Forster, Esqre., one of Her Majesty's Commissioners in Lunacy, or, in the case of his death, incapacity, or refusal to act, then to such person as shall be named by Her Majesty's Attorney-General for the time being to determine the amount which shall be repaid by the said Charles Dickens, his executors or administrators for so much of the said work as shall not have been completed for publication."

Had some sort of premonition occurred to Dickens that the end was near ?

The last page of "Edwin Drood" was written in the Swiss Châlet presented to Dickens by his friend Charles Fechter, the great Anglo-French actor, in the afternoon of his last day of consciousness. He was late in leaving his favourite workshop, as he called the Châlet ; and was then very depressed, tired, and preoccupied. It was not," say his

sister-in-law and his eldest daughter in their volume, 'The Letters of Charles Dickens,' "until they were seated at the dinner-table that a striking change in the colour and expression of his face startled his sister-in-law (Miss Hogarth), and on her asking him if he was ill, he said, 'Yes, very ill; I have been very ill for the last hour.'" He would not have a doctor. "No, he would go on with his dinner, and go afterwards to London."

It was so evident now that he was very seriously ill that Miss Hogarth begged him to lie down.

"Yes, on the ground," he said, very distinctly—these were the last words he spoke, and he slid from his sister-in-law's arm and fell upon the floor.

Charles Dickens remained unconscious all through the night of June 8th, 1870, and until ten minutes past six of the next day, when the watchers saw a shudder pass over him, heard him give a deep sigh, saw one tear roll down his cheek, and his soul went forth into eternity.

A correspondent of *T. P.'s Weekly* wrote, in August, 1907:

"Seeing that anything connected with Dickens is of interest just now, perhaps your readers might like to know of an interesting rencontre that I

had two years ago with one George Belcher, who was Dickens's coachman at the time of the great novelist's death. He it was who picked up 'the Master' when the fatal seizure took place, and, with the assistance of Runt, the gardener, carried him upstairs, and put the horse in to drive to Strood for the doctor. I was returning from the Liege Exposition at the time, and a crowded boat and a night passage were not conducive to making the most of this opportunity, but one incident my fellow-passenger related I recall. The family were returning to town, and it was a question of selling one of the horses. Belcher had received an offer for the animal, and although he knew the Master did not like being disturbed at his work, thought it sufficiently important to approach him in his study. 'After vainly trying to attract his attention,' says Belcher, 'I commenced, "I beg your pardon, sir." "Well, what is it?" says the Master. "Oh, it's about the horse, sir," "Damn the horse," says he, and you may be sure I made myself scarce, as I knew I ought not to have disturbed him at his work. Next morning, when I apologised for disturbing him, he said, "Oh, that's all right, Belcher. Now, what about the horse?" and so the matter was arranged.' My friend is, I believe, still living in the back part of Belgium, where

he was intending settling down to spend his remaining years, and I can supply his address to any one connected with the Dickensonian Society if they think it worth while to follow up this 'find.'"

Before going into particulars concerning Mr. Comyns Carr's version of "Edwin Drood," it will be well to consider some earlier attempts at the dramatisation of the incomplete story. I have before me as I write a printed copy of a play by Walter Stephens entitled, "The Mystery of Edwin Drood," published by Messrs. Chapman and Hall, Piccadilly. No cast of the characters is given, but I find that the play was produced at the Surrey Theatre, November 4th, 1871. The *Referee* of January 26th, 1908, speaking of this drama, says, "It was a wild and whirling piece of work, chiefly remarkable for the fact that Henry Neville played John Jasper, and, if I remember rightly, Bob Brierly on the same evening. Jasper having murdered Edwin, was thenceforth shadowed by Landless disguised as Datchery. After many alarums and excursions he finally swallowed cold poison and perished miserably at the feet of all concerned." The theatre at the time was licensed to Mr. E. F. Edgar. This is in truth a very powerful four-act drama, and follows out Dickens's

suggested intentions, as foreshadowed above, very closely.

As already stated "The Mystery of Edwin Drood," was produced at the Surrey Theatre, November 4th, 1871, with the following cast:—

THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD

Edwin Drood	Mr. George Warde.
John Jasper	Mr. Henry Neville.
Neville Landless	Mr. E. F. Edgar.
The Rev. Septimus Crisparkle	Mr. E. Butler.
Durdles	Mr. John Murray.
Grewgious	Mr. George Yarnold.
Bazzard	Mr. W. Goodwin.
Datchery	Mr. F. Paul.
Deputy	Miss Julia Daly.
Rosa Budd	Miss Maria Jones.
Helen Landless	Miss M. Hayes.
Mrs. Crisparkle	Mrs. Edgar.
Mrs. Tope	Mrs. Watson.

On May 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, 1876, The Wandering Thespians gave Mr. Walter Stephens' play at the Mirror Theatre, Holborn. I mention this because I observe that Mr. Charles G. Allan was the Hiram Grewgious, and I fancy it is the same Mr. Allan who has long been favourably known on the boards of our West End theatres, especially at the Haymarket, and with Sir Herbert Tree.

Another "Mystery of Edwin Drood," was by

G. H. Macdermott, chiefly known to fame as the singer of the great war song, "We don't want to fight, but by Jingo if we do." It was presented at the Britannia Theatre on July 22nd, 1872. Of this the *Referee* also has a word to say:

"The other Drood drama I remember was concocted by the late G. H. Macdermott, then a struggling young East-End actor-of-all-work, filling up his time as a playwright, and was played at the Britannia. The Mystery, according to Macdermott panned out in this wise. Jasper, having, as he supposed, for ever 'removed' Drood from his path, Landless was presently accused of the murder. Here ended Act I. In Act II. Grewgious's clerk Bazzard disguised himself as a detective by the name of Datchery, and with the assistance of Durdles anon fastened the crime on Jasper, who revealed his guilty secret in a trance. The play ended by Drood turning up alive, which so astonished Jasper that he fell dead at his nephew's feet. Jasper was finely played by the 'Brit.'s' popular tragedian, Joseph Reynolds; the still-surviving G. B. Bigwood enacted Durdles; and Macdermott contented himself with the part of Bazzard, *alias* Datchery—a fine 'fat' creation, in which the adapter had taken particularly good care of himself and of which, indeed, he was always very proud."

"THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD."
by
G. H. MACDERMOTT.

Britannia Theatre, July 22nd, 1872.

DATCHERY	Mr. G. H. Macdermott.
EDWIN DROOD	Mr. Chas. Reeve.
JOHN JASPER	Mr. J. Reynolds.
DEAN OF CLOISTERHAM ..	Mr. T. Hyde.
LANDLESS	Mr. E. Newbound.
DURDLES	Mr. G. B. Bigwood.
DEPUTY	Miss Julia Summers.
GREWGIOUS	Mr. John Parry.
CRISPARKLE	Mr. W. H. Pitt.
ROSA BUDD	Miss L. Macdonald.
HELEN LANDLESS	Miss M. A. Bellair.
OPIUM SAL	Miss Jane Coveney.
MRS. CRISPARKLE	Miss L. Rayner.

Another drama was consummated, called " Alive or Dead," at the Park Theatre, Camden Town, by Robert Hall, May 3rd, 1880.

EDWIN DROOD	Mr. W. Howell.
GREWGIOUS	Mr. F. C. Kirk.
JOHN JASPER	Mr. George Byrne.
DURDLES	Mr. C. Cruikshanks.
CRISPARKLE	Mr. W. Vincent.
LANDLESS	Mr. J. C. Emmerson.
DEPUTY	Mr. H. Selby.
JUSTICE SETTLEM	Mr. Keefe.
ROSA BUDD	Miss Stella Brereton.
HELEN LANDLESS	Miss Alice Raynor.
OPIUM SAL	Miss Bella Cuthbert.

I repeat a statement I have seen in print more

than once, which is to the effect that "Edwin Drood" was dramatised by the late Charles Dickens junior (eldest son of the great novelist), and the late Joseph Hatton. The story was concluded on the authority of Charles Dickens himself, who before his death discussed the relation of the mystery with his son. The forecast of the conclusion, more or less communicated to Mr. Luke Fildes, R.A., for the purpose of illustration, agreed with the *dénouement* of the piece. The manuscript of this play still exists in the family, and it was at one time hoped that the late Charles Warner would have taken the character of Jasper. The piece was paragraphed as the next production at the Princess's Theatre as far back as March, 1880, in the *Theatre Magazine*, but somehow arrangements all fell through. The play was advertised as by Charles Dickens and Joseph Hatton.

When the "Mystery of Edwin Drood" was announced for performance at His Majesty's Theatre, a regular controversy arose over the points which the torso of the novel leaves uncertain. There was quite a small literature on the subject, and in addition to the publications I have mentioned there were "Did Jasper kill Drood?" and "Who was Datchery?" but perhaps the most important were Mr. Cuming Walter's "Clues to the Mystery of

Edwin Drood," which caused a great sensation at the time, and Mr. Andrew Lang's reply to it, called, " The Puzzle of Dickens's Last Plot," also " Keys to the Drood Mystery," by Mr. Edwin Charles. Of course each writer solves the " mystery " according to his own taste, belief, and inclination. All these books were published before Sir Herbert's production, and doubtless suggested the play.

In the *Daily Chronicle*, during December, 1907, there was much discussion on the subject, and one of the writers on the paper thus expressed himself in regard to the " Mystery of Edwin Drood." " So far as the absolutely certain points are concerned, one may recall that John Jasper, choir-master of Cloisterham Cathedral, and addicted to opium smoking, did obviously in Dickens's narrative intend to murder his own nephew, Edwin Drood. It was practically stated that this intention was the result of Jasper's fierce and hopeless passion for sweet young Rosa Bud, to whom Edwin was betrothed.

"In the same way no one has doubted that Jasper is supposed to have prepared for the murder by a certain strange tour of the cathedral vaults by night with old Durdles, the stonemason, from whom he learned all about the action of quicklime, which would 'destroy everything but metal.' It is evident also that on a fateful Christmas Eve Jasper

fomented a quarrel between Edwin and Neville Landless—an excellent young fellow—so that if the murder came off suspicion should rest on Neville.

"On that very night, it will be remembered, in the midst of a wild storm, Edwin Drood vanished, after leaving Jasper's rooms in company with Neville. Jasper, stranger in manner than ever, and sinking deeper and deeper in his opium habits, does all he can to incriminate Neville. Then Edwin Drood's watch and chain are found in the river. Helena Landless, Neville's 'gypsy-like' sister, believes defiantly in her brother's innocence. Neville is arrested, tried, acquitted, and reads law in London.

"There now arrived at Cloisterham a quaint old person called Datchery, apparently some one in disguise, who announces himself as a 'single buffer living on his means,' and shows a curious interest in Jasper. At this tantalising point the story abruptly finishes, cut short by Dickens's own death.

"Such is a rough outline of the main points of evidence. Did Jasper murder Edwin Drood? As showing the baffling conflict of possibilities, it may be noted that volume upon volume has already been issued putting forward more or less feasible theories."

That the unsolved "Mystery of Edwin Drood" should have created such a stir on the death of Dickens was only natural, seeing that the well-beloved novelist had become a personal part of the readers of the reading world. Ever since the issue of the last fragment written by the novelist on the day of his fatal seizure, speculation has been rife as to the probable trend the story was to have taken in Dickens's mind. Says an authority on the matter, "Shortly after the death of Dickens rumour had it that Wilkie Collins had been asked to complete the book, and that he had promised to do so. So persistent did this rumour become that Messrs. Chapman and Hall, the publishers of the story, found it necessary to state publicly in the *Times* that the statement was without foundation." This letter I have already given in extenso. Later, Wilkie Collins issued a manifesto to the same effect. Wilkie Collins never attempted to finish the story, yet notwithstanding his avowed determination, an edition of the sequel, entitled, "John Jasper's Secret," is still current in America, bearing on the title-page the names of Wilkie Collins and Charles Dickens the younger, and on the back of the volume an embossed portrait of the author of "A Woman in White." As a matter of fact, "John Jasper's Secret, a Sequel to

"The Mystery of Edwin Drood"

Charles Dickens's unfinished novel 'The Mystery of Edwin Drood,'" to give its full title, was written by a New York journalist, Henry Morford, with the assistance of his wife, both of whom visited England for the purpose. There were eighteen illustrations to this precious fraud, and the work duly appeared in book form in Philadelphia, and in London, but with no statement as to authorship. Subsequent editions appeared, bearing the names of Wilkie Collins and Charles Dickens the younger, as already stated. That this is a shameful falsehood, Wilkie Collins's letter in 1878, in which he said, "I was asked to finish the story, and positively refused," sufficiently emphasises.

Apart from the deliberate continuations there have been several attempts by inference. Prominent among these must figure that by the late R. A. Proctor, the astronomer: "Watched by the Dead: A Loving Study of Dickens's Half-told Tale," the purport of which is sufficiently indicated in the title.

How all these solutions and completions differ from each other may be gathered from the following summary in the *Chronicle*:—

"By the authors of 'John Jasper's Secret'—that Jasper threw Edwin down from the cathedral tower, that Edwin was found alive at the bottom

by Durdles, and that Helena Landless, disguised as a boy went to the opium-den in London frequented by Jasper, and overheard his confession.

"By R. A. Proctor—that Jasper partially strangled Edwin, and put him with quick-lime into a vault, and that Edwin was rescued afterwards by Durdles.

"By J. C. Walters—that Jasper did murder Edwin, and that his guilt was exposed by Helena Landless, disguised as Datchery.

"By Andrew Lang—that Jasper attempted the murder, but 'bungled it,' and that Edwin escaped, returning disguised as Datchery. [This, as I have already intimated, was a rejoinder to Mr. Walter's work.]

"It is in the face of all these efforts on the part of close and keen students of Dickens that one may recognise the extreme cleverness of Mr. Comyns Carr's solution in the play at His Majesty's Theatre. It is, of course, that Jasper did not even attempt the murder, but went through the whole intended business in an opium trance, and afterwards thought he had actually done it, Edwin Drood having overheard his ravings and escaped.

"This, in any case, as Mr. Carr in all modesty claimed, is the only theory yet advanced that answers every requirement of the murder part of the

story. Thus it is on record that Dickens himself described the design of the story as 'new and incommunicable,' and that he commissioned Mr. (now Sir) Luke Fildes, who illustrated the book, to sketch the condemned cell at Maidstone, where it was understood Jasper was to confess the crime." As may be seen, Mr. Carr's notion allows both for a new and interesting psychological study, and for Jasper's self-condemnation.

Appended is the full cast of Mr. J. Comyns Carr's new play, "The Mystery of Edwin Drood," founded on Charles Dickens's unfinished novel of that name, at His Majesty's Theatre, Saturday, January 4th, 1908.

THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD.

JOHN JASPER (*Lay Precentor of the Cathedral*)	Mr. Tree.
EDWIN DROOD (*his nephew and ward*)	Mr. Basil Gill.
MR. GREWGIOUS (*Rosa Bud's guardian*)	Mr. William Haviland.
MR. CRISPARKLE (*Minor Canon of the Cathedral*)	Mr. Claude Flemming.
NEVILLE LANDLESS (*his pupil*)	Mr. Charles Quartermain
THE DEAN OF CLOISTERHAM ..	Mr. Robert H. Atkins.
DURDLES	Mr. G. W. Anson.
THE DEPUTY	Mr. Frank Stanmore.
A LASCAR	Mr. Henry Morrell.
CONGO JACK	Mr. Thomas Weguelin.
A SAILOR	Mr. A. Corney Grain.
ROSA BUD (*Mr. Grewgious' ward*)	Miss Adrienne Augarde.

HELENA LANDLESS	Miss Constance Collier.
MRS. CRISPARKLE (*Mother of the Minor Canon*)	Miss Cicely Richards.
MISS TWINKLETON (*a School-Mistress*)	Miss Muriel Alexander.
PRINCESS PUFFER (*Proprietress of an Opium Den*)	Miss Lydia Rachel.
MRS. TOPE	Miss Augusta Haviland.
SERVANT TO MRS. CRISPARKLE	Miss Hilda Moore.

ACT I.—Tableau 1. An opium den in the East End of London. Tableau 2. The Cloisters of Cloisterham Cathedral. Tableau 3. A room at Mr. Jasper's.
ACT II.—Tableau 1. Outside the Cathedral. Tableau 2. A room at Mr. Jasper's (six months elapse).
ACT III.—Tableau 1. A room at Mr. Crisparkle's. Tableau 2. The crypt of Cloisterham Cathedral. Tableau 3. A room at Mr. Crisparkle's.
ACT IV.—A room in the infirmary of the county gaol.

Unfortunately the piece failed to attract the public, although it was a magnificent production, and magnificently acted. Indeed, I do not think Sir Herbert Tree ever acted better in his life. It was the weirdest of weird performances and positively thrilling in its intensity and dramatic power. The story, too, as set forth was distinctly and decidedly interesting, and the experiment was well worth the labour and the art spent upon it.

As a matter of record I give the plot from the circular handed to each Press representative on the memorable night of the fascinating performance.

"The Mystery of Edwin Drood"

Some Notes on the Play.

"Mr. Carr's play opens, as Charles Dickens' novel, with a scene in the East End opium den. John Jasper is discovered in the company of opium-sodden lascars and others. With familiarity to his environment he takes a pipe from the opium hag, Princess Puffer. He dreams and talks in his dreams. His dreams tell secrets. He talks of 'Ned' and 'Cloisterham' and 'Rosa.' The hag listens intently and stores in her memory the words which so frequently recur in his dream wanderings. The uneasy dreams merge into sparkling opium visions of sultans and their palaces, of dancing girls and flashing scimitars, and then slowly he comes back to the wakeful world again. The hag tells him that he has talked in his sleep of his visions, but says no word of his first uneasy mutterings. He leaves her, and the curtain falls on the hag muttering to herself the words 'Ned, Cloisterham, Rosa.'

"The second scene takes places before the Cathedral at Cloisterham. The service is just over, and the congregation is scattering. Edwin Drood is seen with Rosa Bud, his fiancée, Neville and Helena Landless, Minor Canon Crisparkle, the Dean and others. We learn of the engagement of Edwin and Rosa Bud, and that they are chafing under the fact that the engagement had been imposed on them

'by will and bequest' and their coming separation is foreshadowed. We learn also of the sombre passion of Jasper for Rosa, of her shuddering disgust at his presence, and that his mind is obsessed by the intention of Drood's murder. From Durdles' garrulous chatter we see him learning the means by which he shall do his work and hide it.

"The intense interest in the drama begins in the second act. Jasper, Drood and Neville Landless sup together on that wild eventful Christmas Eve. All seem good-will and good-fellowship between them. Then Jasper, slipping aside, pours some powerful powdered drug into his brew of mulled port and ladles it out with eager nervous haste into the others' glasses. A quarrel follows between Drood and Landless—the quarrel over Rosa's picture—and presently the two, reconciled in their half-drugged state, go out to watch the storm upon the river, Landless is seen no more upon that night, but Jasper, brooding over the foul deed he means to do, is startled by Drood's return alone. While the lad sits in a drowsy sleep he steels his nerves to strangle him. He loops his woollen scarf all ready, but resolution fails him. Drood awakes and goes to his bed. Jasper returns to the fire to brood again on his intended crime. The opium hag steals in. She had traced him from London. Jasper again

takes the drug and in a delirious dream again, as so often before, enacts by himself an imagined murder of Drood. His cries awake the sleeping lad, who stealing down, to his inexpressible horror, sees and hears enough. He feels they must never meet again. He stealthily goes out. Jasper awakes at dawn with all the horror of the dream upon him, he finds the watch and chain—the metal that lime could not destroy—in the place where, having stolen them from Drood's sleeping body, he has put them till the morning. Uncertain yet whether he dreams or not, he hastens to the bedroom, finds that Drood is not there, and then, convinced of his crime, rushes down, pale and nerve-shattered, to meet Mr. Crisparkle, and tries to throw suspicion on the luckless Landless.

"Suspicion upon Landless grows, and it is only Mr. Grewgious who scents the true trail. He tells Jasper of the ring which Drood returned to him on the night of his supposed murder, and he frightens Jasper into believing that this ring must be amongst the dust in the vault where Drood's body in his dream was cast into lime. Surprising Jasper coming out of the vault he holds up the ring, and Jasper taking it for the last evidence of his guilt, falls in a faint. In the next scene he confesses the murder, and finally is found, a dying man, in the Infirmary

of the County gaol. There again, in delirium, he is dreaming and shuddering at his crime. Mr. Crisparkle is comforting his last moments, when, as an apparition to him, comes Drood in the flesh. Jasper, with enough return to consciousness to see Drood and Rosa brought to each other again before him, dies, and the curtain falls with these two in forgiveness mourning him."

In conclusion I may state that, almost without exception, the London press hailed the play, if not as a masterpiece, at any rate as a wonderful achievement, and a great success for all concerned. And yet it only ran a little over one month.

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NOTE.—*All references to the Plays by Charles Dickens and those based on his works will be found under the heading "Plays;" and the "Theatres" mentioned will be found under that heading only. As Charles Dickens's name will be seen on almost every page, it has not been thought necessary to make extended reference to his cognomen, except in the general instances recorded.*

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